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Near East & South Asia

JPRS-NEA-88-071

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ISRAEL

Army Officials Discuss Fate of Territories

44230063c Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew
22 Jul 88 p 13

[Text] Men who served until recently in senior positions at the highest levels of the IDF have joined those who hold the opinion that it is necessary to find ways to free ourselves of responsibility for the territories given certain conditions. Last week, the editorial board of HA'ARETZ hosted seven of them to hear their opinions on the question of the future of the administered territories, in light of their experience and expertise in military and security affairs. The discussion dealt with the questions of the security arrangements that Israel needs to pursue, the identity of possible negotiating partners, and how Israel is to act if it should find no partners.

[Question] Thank you for coming to let us hear your opinions. On the basis of the positions you held in the IDF, each of you certainly must have something of importance to say on the subject of security. Each of you has recently said that we must search for ways to free ourselves of responsibility for territories occupied since 1967. And each of you has made that depend upon one condition or another.

The late Levi Eshkol once said: "Every one is ready to compromise, but everyone loves his own compromise." In reality, the desired solution is generally not achievable. If the desired solution cannot be attained, what is the alternative? Continuing control of the territories or conceding those conditions which cannot be achieved?

Today, there is general satisfaction with the relations created between us and Egypt following the Camp David Accords. Those accords were achieved as a result of the Yom Kippur War. Was it possible to come to the current relations with Egypt even without the Yom Kippur War? This hypothetical question was a very practical aspect: Is it possible to find a solution in the territories without another war? In many respects, the Yom Kippur War caused Israel very serious damage. There is good reason to fear that a war over the territories would cause even more serious losses, even if it is assumed that we would win.

There is a limit to the extent and severity of the losses that Israel is able to bear. Because of our continuing control of the territories, Israel's international position is deteriorating. In international relations, maintaining the status quo is generally considered a positive thing. As a result of our continuing control of the territories, the concept of the status quo is applied to us derogatorily. Let us hope that this discussion will show us what we can and should do.

[Nati Sharoni] If our goal is to preserve a Jewish state in the land of Israel, we must cut ourselves off from the majority of the Arabs. This is the basis for my conception of security. I recognize the threat to our existence is latent in a general war with the Arab states. The second threat is not a matter of existence. That is the situation of friction and the events we have come to call the intifadah. In the long run, this threatens the values of the Jewish state.

My conclusion is that there is no acceptable solution today to all the problems bound up in this dispute. Therefore, any possible solution would be geared entirely for a long range point of view measured in dozens of years, and avoiding any immediate timetable. We must try to imagine a scenario, between us and the Arab states and between us and the Palestinians in Judea and Samaria, that will arise in another 25-35 years. In my view, Judea and Samaria in themselves have no importance to this scenario.

The premise of the scenario is that peace shall prevail between Israel and her neighbors; that this peace will influence the defense budgets of the Arab states, their military forces and their geographic locations; and that it will influence the nature of their training. With the aid of a warning system, it will enable mutual supervision by Israeli and Arab teams over military action, and the army's deployment, location, and training. When all these conditions exist and the regular armies have been greatly reduced, when a normal state of affairs exists between us and those Arab countries, then the territories will have no military significance.

This is a future situation which I am willing to agree to today. How do we get there? We must identify each of the steps on the way and what happens during them, and find a proper response. At the end of the process, we will not maintain any military forces in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza.

Clearly, so long as certain stages do not occur in the process that would allow me to thin out military forces and leave the territories, there will be matters on which I will not compromise. Therefore, control of the key points on the mountain ridge and the eastern slopes of Judea and Samaria, the warning system, the command and control system, the anti-aircraft system, deployment of forces in the key points—all these are in the nature of conditions for the short term. Even these can be gradually reduced according to developments. We are engaging in dynamic situations. But to get the parties to the table, we must declare now what we are willing to accept, the negotiations to be conducted on the way to the goal, but not the nature of the goal. With the conditions that I have described, it is possible to maintain the security of a lesser Israel and to achieve the political objective that is important: to remain a Jewish state free of other phenomena involved in holding a large Arab minority in Judea and Samaria.

[Question] It does not matter to you whether, at the end of the process, there will be a Palestinian state?

[Sharoni] At the end of the process, there will be a Palestinian state that is woven into the fabric of the solution, taking on itself demilitarization of the land west of the Jordan; that is an essential part of the process. In this picture of the final situation I have described, that does not bother me.

[Avraham Rotem] On the intellectual level, both camps, the left and the right, have adopted a kind of wonderful mechanism for evading genuine confrontation with the problem. But on another, more comfortable level, the emotional, a lack of responsibility prevails. The right wing is casting into the depths of oblivion the real problem of the demographic development, the terrible power of hatred between nations—and this is a hatred that can last for generations—and the great strength of the aspirations of the Palestinians for national freedom.

By the same token, this camp is encouraging delusions that in my view are baseless, of millions of Jews standing at the gate who, if only we clear the land for them, will move there; and of hundreds of thousands of Arabs who will somehow disappear. And there are those encouraging illusions of co-existence in the manner of apartheid, or nurturing a messianic outlook that peace will come to us from heaven on high.

The left wing is ignoring real Arab interests, supported by powerful military forces, and the genuine threat to the existence of the state of Israel. They are ignoring camps overflowing with hundreds of thousands of refugees who declare again and again that their home is inside the Green Line, and the characteristics of modern, sophisticated terror. On the other hand, they are encouraging what I regard as unfounded dreams of the degree of humaneness possible in the process of solution, of the good nature of the Arab partners, and of their high-minded inclinations.

The security arrangements necessary for the state of Israel are many years off. It is impossible in an intellectual exercise to make a jump of a generation or two and to speak now of such security arrangements as though it were possible to achieve them in a single term of office.

In my opinion, to demonstrate good will and a course of action, we must announce that we are not bound to the whole of the land of Israel for the needs of defense and security. Israel would declare its readiness, starting now, to yield for, let us say, 50 years, or until a final resolution, its sovereignty over all the land that is not today Israeli by law.

Israel needs to encourage Palestinization of Jordan. In every practical respect, Jordan is Palestine. Two-thirds of the Palestinians live there. That is the only place where it may be possible to solve the problem of Palestinians living in refugee camps.

It is impossible to work out a solution that leaves 700-800 thousand refugees on the borders. It will be necessary to transfer them, and I see no possibility other than that Palestinians will absorb Palestinians. Even from an ethical perspective, that is the most reasonable course. In my estimation, Palestinization of Jordan means giving up the special nature of the relations with Husayn, and heavy hinting to the Arab world that we are putting an end to these special relations.

Beyond this, it is necessary to hold the territories not as national living space, not as a place needed for settling millions of people, but as a security zone in which the state of Israel can determine exactly the nature of her security needs. At least at this stage, I think that this is a matter involving much more than two or three warning stations on the mountain crest and some kind of unit on the Jordan River.

We cannot even consider the possibility that, in another four or five years, still in the absence of peace, should there be an armed conflict between us and the Arabs, it will need to be fought against 40-45 divisions, with all the most modern equipment, in a space that is less than all the land of Israel. Even that area is not large enough for conducting a war. Perhaps some day, when such armies will not exist, when there will be security arrangements that do not allow them to approach this area, when some disarmament will occur, this security will not be needed.

In my view, the end of the road—and I am prepared to indicate now that this is so that my partners will know where I intend to go—is a state of Israel where there is now a state of Israel and a Palestinian state where Jordan now exists. As far as I am concerned, the Palestinians can then establish whatever form of government they want. Let 'Arafat be the president; it will not bother me. That is their state, and there is a land in the middle, from which I will not expel the population; that is a territory that both sides will recognize as problematic, and by definition shall have no sovereignty, neither Israeli nor Jordanian. The people living there are citizens of Jordan and pay taxes to Jordan. They have full relations with Jordan. The Israeli citizens living there have exactly the same connection, but to Israel. The legal situation in the territories permits the two populations to live without demanding sovereignty. And the Israeli portion in that area is restricted, built and inhabited, with army camps and settlements, and marked off solely according to security needs and not according to territorial ambitions for some sort of sought after living space.

We need to begin the process unilaterally. That may enable us to find a partner for the future. The only partner today says: friends, pull back to the 1967 borders and rely on me. That kind of "reliance" concerning the existence of the state of Israel I cannot accept.

[Question] If we understand you correctly, the status quo in the territories will not change during the transition period. In light of the intifadah, how do you open the process for the long term?

[Rotem] By "unilateral action," in my opinion, the security aspect can be satisfied today without any arrangements that depend on Husayn, and with less than 100 percent of the territory, taking into account Israel's military strength, which I regard as very powerful. We need not decide to flee from the West Bank because things there are difficult for us now. But we can decide that some of the land is not essential to us, and to prove to the Arabs that we are serious, we can clear out of it, although we will still be around. That would give the people of that territory an opportunity to show what they will do when the IDF is gone. If they start shooting Katyusha rockets or killing one another, and there is international trouble, I do not know what will happen. But since I am not bound by international agreements, I can always change. I made a mistake, I am trying something else. But I am proposing to try to leave those areas that now are causing me trouble.

[Amos 'Amir] It is possible, permissible and necessary, in order to build momentum for conciliation and negotiations, to give up territory. I agree that the final goal is a Jewish state free of oppressive demographic problems. They say that yielding the first centimeter west of the Jordan River will gravely endanger Israel's security. I have argued that the opposite is true in this matter.

With your permission, I will turn to aspects involving the sky, the national sky that is, not the heavens. We won four advantages at the end of the Six Day War. First, the ground threat to the Israeli Air Force's permanent bases was placed at a distance. Second was the ability to deploy forces: warning stations, radar installations, electronic warfare systems, and anti-aircraft forces on the mountain ridge of Judea and Samaria and even east of the ridge in order to meet a threat from the east. After Camp David, we lost the Sinai but kept Judea and Samaria, the most important element. The fourth advantage is that we are accustomed to short distances on our way east, towards targets east of the Jordan. And the enemy is farther off from the point of view of striking targets within the Green Line.

There are some elements on which it is agreed, at least in the West, that there can be no concessions: on the Jordan as the security border, on demilitarization of the territory, on our right to maintain warning stations in Judea and Samaria in the places we want, and on freedom of flight in the airspace of Judea and Samaria.

[Question] You have given up the anti-aircraft installations?

[Amir] I gave them up, but they were not all that important. Concerning the four advantages that we are sacrificing—for pushing back the ground threat to our

bases, there are three components. The first is the threat from a regular army, and that is serious, if it exists. If an Arab standing army should return to Judea and Samaria with artillery and armor and the ability to make a frontal assault, in order to operate against our air bases, that would be a grave problem. Accordingly, we have said that the area must be demilitarized. The second threat involves small scale fighting, small commando units, capable of infiltrating and causing damage. The Air Force needs to deploy and defend its bases both in the current situation and in the situation following a withdrawal, because commando forces will be able to penetrate even if they originate from beyond the Jordan.

The third component, which has recently become fashionable, are ground-to-ground missiles. In this matter, it makes no difference whether or not you pull back from the Jordan.

As for increasing the training grounds, my best judgment is that we do not need to yield these areas.

Regarding deployment of a warning system, we cannot forget a very important element. Today's airborne radar systems are the last word on the modern battlefield. Similarly, modern combat planes have an automatic detection and warning capability that frees them of dependence upon ground stations. If we should lose the warning capability of stations on the ground, there will still be the airborne warning system, flexible and able to operate everywhere.

When we speak of shortening distances, I would say that this is more significant for helicopter operations, because there the ranges are dozens of kilometers. When we speak of more decisive forces, from the point of view of the Air Force, that is to say combat planes, dozens of kilometers do not play any role.

[Giyora Forman] Concerning the air, it is possible to complicate the picture because the Air Force is not just combat planes. There are also transport and helicopters, and the fixed line is the location of the enemy's defensive systems. Certainly, the primary constraint for us is the security concern, but the question of what will be across the line is definitely relevant. Whether there will be a state that needs to exist independently or that will be tied to Jordan or Israel.

The problem of total security for Israel can take many solutions on two axes of compensation. The first is demilitarization and the second is compensation in other terms. The demilitarization can be up to the Jordan and even beyond the Jordan, with defensive lines. For the Air Force, the location of the defensive systems on the other side is very significant. When we reach a settlement, they can be both further away and closer, so there are different lines for a solution.

Demilitarization, your military force, your economic strength, the political arrangements—in the absence of any one of these foundations, there is no security. But at the edges, when they exist, there is replacement among them, just like factors of production, and the product here is security. You can hold less land. By the way, more land does not always mean more security, all other things being equal. For example, I am not sure that taking Cairo during the Six Day War of itself would have added to Israel's security.

[Efrayim Sneh] Without a settlement, another war is inevitable. The status quo will reinforce two processes. The first is Israel's international isolation; right now, the Democratic Party convention is underway in the United States. Who would have imagined that the subject of self-determination for the Palestinians would be so central a matter there, with such unbalanced forces? The second is severance of the moderate nations from the peace process. For reasons connected to their internal situations, Egypt and Jordan will be unable, while the status quo in the territories continues, to persist in their current relations with Israel. And that of necessity links them to a coalition of which a militant Syria stands as its central axis. So long as the territories burn, it is impossible to preserve the existing relations between Egypt and Israel and Husayn's feeling of obligation to the peace process.

These days, you must add another factor to the equation, the Iraqis. The Iraqi factor, which is an active peace process was supposed to give Jordan backing against Syria, is liable to be enticed into such a coalition. And the combination of Israel's isolation and of the Arabs uniting on the Palestinian issue is a prescription for another war.

Because of the international situation, characterized by an inclination of the great powers to smother local centers of conflict, it is reasonable to suppose that another war will bring a settlement, but an imposed settlement. This would be a settlement deriving from the interests of the superpowers and not from recognition of the two national movements, the Israeli-Jewish and the Arab-Palestinian, which cannot defeat one another.

An imposed settlement may indeed lead us to a Jewish state. But we must also consider what kind of Jewish state. From such a settlement, Israel will emerge weakened, frustrated, embittered, violated, and I do not want to draw a historical analogy with a country that came out humiliated from an international settlement. Therefore, I fear such an imposed settlement may be the seed of still another war, more grievous than its predecessor.

It is very difficult to withdraw from the axes and the main cities, especially in Judea and Samaria but also in Gaza, particularly because of the extensive Israeli settlement. A withdrawal that is not from the Jordan, from the

axes and from the main cities, simply is not a withdrawal. Under present conditions, such a withdrawal as a unilateral act is not practical.

Fundamentally, I do not believe in action without a partner, certainly when it is a matter of Israel's security. I think that the process of Palestinization of Jordan has already started. For the Palestinians today are not just two-thirds of Jordan's population, but also almost the dominant part of the political and economic establishment in Jordan. As for transferring refugees, here too it is necessary to remember just who are these two-thirds of the population on the East Bank. For the most part, they themselves live in refugee camps. Thus, I doubt the rationality of transferring refugees to refugees. In considering the matter of settling and transferring refugees, we must remember that more than 40 years have passed since this problem was created, and in most places, including some of the camps in Lebanon, the residents of the camps have been integrated into their economic surroundings. The one place in which this perhaps has not occurred is the Gaza Strip, where there is no reasonable proportion between the number of refugees and the work positions available. Accordingly, the question of the refugees in Gaza will require an economic solution of much more imagination, vision, and resources.

The right of return is still included in the official rhetoric of the PLO. But, to the best of my knowledge, the mainstream of the inhabitants today speaks less and less about the right of return; what the leaders talk about is not going back to Yafo and to Ramallah, but saving what they have.

[Question] What about the Gaza Strip? That may be the most problematic area.

[Forman] The security problem there was created because of the other problems.

[Question] True, but none of those who have spoken has said a word about this situation.

[Yanosh Ben-Gal] Because the Cave of Makhpela is elsewhere. Put the Cave of Makhpela in Gaza and there will be a problem in Gaza.

[Question] There are few settlers there. Altogether, about 2,500.

[Ori Or] Still, when at first there was a discussion on the radio about Gaza, Gush Emunim said, "No way." Even though there is no Cave of Makhpela there. In the present status quo, the situation will not return to what it once was. I see the first danger to our security as an undermining of the national consensus. The current situation strikes at the consensus and, as long as it persists, will force another war on us. The crack in the national consensus is getting deeper. To the credit of the IDF, one must say that, despite all the arguing, we are done with the war in Lebanon in the army. There were

130 men who refused to serve in Lebanon, today there are very few who refuse, but now the argument is much sharper, and to the extent that it deepens, so the breach in the national consensus will deepen.

Now, let us see what kind of society we have here. This is a society in the process of taking shape, with people from the East and from the West, religious and secular. It is a society still not fully formed, and rightly so. Aside from its technology, it is still a Third World society, with many, many unsolved problems. Such a society cannot continue to rule over one and a half million Arabs today and two million Arabs in another 12 years.

It is necessary to define the objectives of the army. The primary objective is protecting the existence of the state of Israel. Second is guarding the safety of our citizens, including the war against terror. We are beginning to repeat the situation in Lebanon, in which we invest many more resources in a secondary objective than for the primary one. Yitzhaq Rabin has rightly called our attention to the hundreds of millions that we have been spending in the past months. That is spending almost on the scale of the substitutes for the Lavi warplane. That is money that we need to develop a missile or another Merkava tank, not to mention training expenses. So we are draining ourselves in any case of our limited resources, directing them to a secondary objective. Therefore, maintaining the status quo is a danger.

What solution do I see? I do not want to draft a solution for the next 50 years. The goal is a safe, Jewish democratic state. Our great debate is between geography and demography. Despite the missiles and despite the advanced technologies, geography still has importance. Twelve kilometers of ground is twelve kilometers of ground. A missile does not conquer them and a plane only bombs them, and they can be crossed on foot in a matter of hours.

Geography has value, but when you stand that against demography, demography is the main threat. Therefore, we need to compromise on geography, upon the terms mentioned here. The condition is that no foreign army shall be west of the Jordan, and the Air Force must be able to conduct flights on the west side of the Jordan. Not so much for training, although that is important, but to assure advance warning and control of the territory.

If a moderate government should arise and announce what I am saying here, the PLO will be worried. For if we come with a reasonable solution, they will lose the leadership in the territories. There is a chance that a moderate leadership will arise, but we must get the process started, because until now there has been no Israeli option. There is a chance a leadership will arise that will understand that it has something to lose.

There is no solution to the situation without Jordan, since I am against a Palestinian state between the Jordan and the sea. Jordan must and can be a partner to any such discussion.

I oppose a unilateral solution. If we adopt a unilateral solution, the Arabs in the territories will correctly take it as a victory for them: now they [the Israelis] do not have the strength to go on, they fear for democracy, for security, and the costs; they are too weak to fight terror. Now the minarets of the mosques will turn forward and arouse the people on to Ashkelon, Tel-Aviv, Yafo, and Haifa. So we must be patient and not go for such a solution.

[Ben-Gal] I see danger in the world view of the right wing. If the new Likud of today, under the leadership of Shamir and Arens and Arik Sharon, should win the elections, sooner or later it will apply Israeli law to two million Arabs. We will enter a 100 years' war. I do not see any possibility of escaping such a terrible struggle; we will win, but that victory will not bring us any political achievement. The one achieve of war has been the peace with Egypt, and that was on Egypt's initiative.

The danger in a victory of the right is one of security, demography, it's international in scope. When Israel was established, we wanted to be Athens. The Likud is moving us to Sparta. Throughout its history, Zionism was a pragmatic concept, coming to terms with reality. Zionism agreed to partition because it reached a compromise with what was possible and not with the messianic dream in the Likud version. We want to be realists, and we have a vision, a faith, that peace is possible. And this is a matter of peace with enemies, because you do not make peace with friends.

The faith of the right wing is in Greater Israel, the entire land of Israel, with two million Arabs. This is serious because already every child born in Israel today is born into a future minority in Israel.

As for the Intifadah, I do not accept the argument that it is too late to lock the barn after the cows have left. We will return the cows and lock the gate again.

Concerning the question of what we need for security besides peace, first of all, we need the ability to deter. Second, a warning capability. Third, the ability to make decisions. Those are the three components that enable every state, a fortiori Israel, to preserve its security.

We make giving up the territories—and I say explicitly, the greater part of them—conditional upon a genuine, contractual peace between us and the Jordanians. The public sometimes has a feeling that first we will make concessions and then we will get peace. The process is the reverse: without peace, the concessions will not be realized and none of us will agree to it or even speak of it. That is a very important point.

As for the elements of a settlement, aside from peace: First of all, demilitarization. Second, a security boundary on the Jordan. Third, the right of pursuit. Fourth, the right of the IDF, upon certain conditions, to enter territory we have given up. Fifth, protection of the security zones in Judea and Samaria will rest in Israel's hands. The sixth component is security settlements in those areas that we determine are important to the state of Israel.

[Question] What political framework will the demilitarized Arab population make up?

[Ben-Gal] In my opinion, the Arabs in the demilitarized territories will go through two stages. The first stage will be Jordanian administration. That will make it possible to digest the process and to carry out control and supervision of it. I believe that the Hashemite administration will take an upward course, not a downward one, so that, in the end, the territories will be annexed to the Palestinian state that will exist across the Jordan. They will become the western districts of Jordan-Palestine.

[Question] Up till now, you have spoken of withdrawal in stages, in various time periods, from most of the West Bank and Gaza. In your opinion, what will be the solution for the Jewish settlements, for all the settlements scattered around the territories? Do all of you see the possibility of Jewish-Arab coexistence in the territories after the IDF leaves?

Each of you supports withdrawal, but the conditions are air space, warning stations, the right of pursuit, the Jordan valley, and provinces. The Arab side has not been taken into account. Who is the partner who will enter talks with all these conditions?

[Ben-Gal] The defense minister recently said that Israel's ambition must be on no account to bring the dispute down from one between states to one between people; that is, to one between us and the Palestinians. And that is the crux of the problem. So long as we do not lower the dispute to that level, it will not have a solution.

Some of you have said that there is time. We have heard this for 30 years. On the other hand, Efrayim Sneh says that, without a solution, there will be war. And his words are couched in terms of a much shorter time than that. Is it possible to stretch out the matter and yet avoid war? And if war breaks out because of the delay, what situation will we face for the coming years if the uprising that has bolted from the barn will not return? If war breaks out, how will it happen?

We want to be sure not to return to the fifties, to the murderous infiltrations and the retaliatory actions. If we reach an agreement with Jordan, how will we compel demilitarization of the provinces? One cannot expect that a sovereign state returning to that which was captured from it will take upon itself arrangements such as Germany was forced to accept in 1919.

A similar matter concerns the Palestinians. A settlement with the Palestinians will in fact be with the PLO. Do you seriously think that underground organizations that have perpetrated massacres and been hunted without quarter by all the intelligence agencies of the world, not just by Israel's, will not aspire to convert themselves into a regular army?

With whom is it necessary to conduct negotiations over withdrawal and security arrangements? And how must Israel act in the event that the Arab side refused to reach an agreement? And there is a subject that no one has touched upon, the subject of resources, such as water.

[Sharoni] The question has been asked whether the settlements in Judea and Samaria will be able to survive without a presence to protect them. In my opinion, no. If we evacuate our military forces at any stage, and that will have to happen at the end of the process, that will spell the end of the settlements. In any place without the IDF, the settlements have no ability to survive. Therefore, the test for the settlements is, are they an obstacle to peace or not. Peace must not be a prisoner to the settlements.

I suggest that Israel stop seeing itself as the one dictating the course of events in the Middle East. We tried that in Lebanon and learned a lesson. I also lack the power to dictate what will be the leadership of any population.

[Question] On the one hand, you say that Israel must stop dictating events, and on the other, you demand that the PLO change. Is there not a contradiction in that? That we will not sit down with a central player in this arena until he changes?

[Sharoni] I do not sit down with every one upon every condition that he sets for me, and I also am not willing to accept a solution with which I cannot live. I want to live. More than that, I want to live as a Jewish state. There is full consensus for that.

On the subject of demilitarization, we must remember that we are working on a completely asymmetrical condition. There is asymmetry of land here, asymmetry of resources, asymmetry in every measure. Accordingly, you cannot draw analogies from Europe or other parts of the world, in which the conditions are vastly different from our own.

As for a partner in peace, you cannot draw an analogy between Egypt and Jordan or Syria, because the conditions are not the same. You must analyze the regimes to find out who are the partners for negotiations. In my opinion, a solution cannot be achieved in the period of 3 years. It is impossible to carry out a complete withdrawal of the IDF from Judea and Samaria in 2 years. In a process, you know how it begins, where you want to go and the route from here to there that is to be marked out by long, exhausting negotiations, after which you have obligations.

[Sne] It is not practical to evacuate most of the settlements. The safety of the residents must be an integral part of any agreement. That is a technical-military problem more than one of fundamentals, since any agreement that does not provide for open borders and free travel will not be an agreement. I do not think that the object of a settlement needs to be a border in the nature of what there was up to 1967. We are speaking of an integration of economies and of freedom of travel, and need to see this in that context. I also think that this is an agreement acceptable to the Jewish inhabitants of the territories, who cannot be regarded as all of one piece. That same sector of the settlers that rules out any agreement in advance, and is prepared to do everything to thwart an agreement in its early stages, is liable to stand as an obstacle.

Turning to water—this is a critical resource in any agreement. Today, each settler is allocated 21 times as much water as each Arab in Judea and Samaria. Such a situation cannot be maintained in an agreement. To prevent a dispute, an agreement on joint control of the water sources will be required. There is a subterranean reservoir of water that knows no boundaries. You can pump water from one place and lower the water level at another. Therefore, this subject must be under a joint authority.

The question has been asked, who will be willing to accept the numerous conditions that we would impose. A solution is a matter of compromise, and compromise means concessions. The breach that will open among us is also, on our side, a concession. That too is a price we shall pay. Thus, these are conditions that will not violate their sovereignty, if they come in good faith. He who wants peace has no need of an army in Shekhem and Tulkarm. That is no violation of sovereignty. So far as I know the Palestinians' state of mind, this issue will not trouble them. The question is, who do we need to talk with, and on this issue we swing from one extremist position to another. The latest fashion is to ignore the Jordanian partner because the intifadah has apparently eliminated it. Do not forget: Jordan has a compact but modern army, and our border with her is the longest. Jordan must be a partner.

The second partner is the Palestinians. The PLO is a general name, that in the collective association of the nation of Israel means RPG's, Kalastinikovs, and bombs. In truth, the PLO is the name of the Palestinian national movement. There are various streams in every national movement. There are extremists, moderates, and those in between. And in this rational image, it is necessary to deal with the PLO. If the PLO is the squad on the fence of Kfar Yuval, I have nothing to offer them. If they are moderates in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza, willing to talk with me on the basis of recognition of the existence of the state of Israel, that is a different story.

[Question] Have we not created an obstacle by our own hands in that, for 21 years, we have not permitted them to develop a leadership and everyone who raises his head becomes an administrative detainee?

[Sne] Mistakes have certainly been made concerning the leadership. I do not think it will be possible to conduct a dialogue with Palestinians without a democratic election of representatives by the inhabitants of the territories. I do not think that this can be done under current conditions, but it will be necessary in the future. And I think it was no accident that, in Shultz's original plan, that was a stage between the intermediate agreement and the beginning of discussions on a permanent settlement. And the Shultz plan, in fact, is a later adoption of the Peres plan.

[Ben-Gal] We are not concluding in advance that the negotiations will succeed. We are not obliged to sign a peace agreement with the enemy on any terms. We are seeking, from an historical perspective, to provide a new and different opportunity in the 41st year of the state of Israel, to attempt to break free of the circle of warfare of the last 40 years, by means of negotiations with the enemy. If we succeed, we will bring peace and the entire nation of Israel will gain. If we do not succeed, we will create a consensus such that, should there be a war after that failure, we will enter it with the clear understanding that it is unavoidable.

If war should break out, there will be a problem of a deep split in the army, between the units composed of reservists and those manned by 18 to 20 year olds; between those with an historical memory, political understanding and an empirical view, and those who are still a "clean slate."

If the Likud should win the elections, it will not provide this opportunity and there will be war. For the Likud will annex the territories, the Arabs will see that there is no solution and the struggle, the rebellion, the intifadah, will burst forth more severely.

As for the question who to talk with, according to the London document, there is someone to talk to. The king was there with very senior officials. That was not a meeting between just two men. But after Israel said neither "yes" nor "no" to the Shultz initiative, and we needed to supply the first "yes," the king pulled back. He does not want to take a bullet in the head or to lose his kingdom. Let us proceed from the assumption that there is no one to talk with. Then it is our duty to send out positive vibrations, signalling that we are searching for someone to talk with.

I say that we cannot talk with the PLO. I am willing to talk with Palestinians. I believe that when they find a solution for their identity, of a nation with land and a flag, they will be different from the PLO Palestinians. If there should be a Palestinian state in Judea and Samaria, it will spread to the east and not to the west, because spreading west would endanger their national existence. We are stronger than they, and they know it.

[Rotem] It seems to me very natural that a proper process at its start will not be supported by a consensus or even by a majority. Therefore, I am committed to the idea of unilateral action, independent of an agreement with anyone.

If people will spend all their time on theoretical matters, such as whether or not to agree to an international conference, and do we need Husayn, in the meantime they will create conditions in the territories that will preclude a solution. I do not understand and do not accept the opinion of Ori Or that while the intifadah goes on, negotiations with Jordan over evacuating all or most of the West Bank will be seen as strength on the Israeli side, while unilateral action will harm Israel's interests. That will be seen as weakness. At least in military circles, it is understood that it is possible to subdue the intifadah, but the price will be so high, in undermining our values and in our international support, that the grand achievement of physical suppression, so that the Arabs will not throw stones, is very doubtful in my view.

The IDF's image has begun to decline because Gulliver in the land of the little people is always competing in a way that magnifies his weakness. No wonder that he is slowly taking on the appearance of a weakling. The real army is strong and able to meet the challenge, and it will be a true waste of that power not to take advantage of it.

Of course, I would be happy, as Sne has said, to find that it is possible to settle the refugees from the west side of the Jordan. For me, that would be both a pleasing innovation and glad tidings, and would ease the entire situation. But it seems to me a dream. As for negotiations with Jordan, what are we going to speak with Husayn about? For security, what can he give us? Our problem is Syria and Iraq, and it is them we must reach.

In Gaza, there is much less flexibility, but I can announce today that I have no demands of sovereignty over the Strip and so I would not allow settlements to continue there. I would not develop a situation there from which I could not get out afterwards.

[Or] Regarding dismantling the settlements, except for those necessary for security purposes, when we come to the moment of truth, 99 percent of them will not raise their weapons. In Hebron, there is a complex group that will have to be dealt with. On the subject of who to talk with, I rejected what Rotem said in scorn of Jordan. From Eilat to the Golan Heights, Jordan is a long line, a powerful front. It is impossible to talk without solving this problem with Jordan.

Palestinians—I think that an election is necessary in Judea and Samaria and that will create this possibility, and here people have said that, for the first time, they will build something that gives them something to lose, which makes possible the growth of a leadership. In my

opinion, it will grow. As for our society, in order to win at war, to go on and to survive, it needs consensus; whenever there is a consensus, this army will fight.

[Forman] There are 60,000 residents in the settlements; most of them are there to torpedo any peace agreements. They cannot be allowed to stay.

Who is the partner? There are at least four partners, or three, and ourselves. The three are Jordan, the Palestinians, and a delegation from the United States. Who among the Palestinians is a partner? The answer is tied to the question of a dispute between nations and a dispute between states. In the end, the agreement will be between states. The Palestinians are not a state.

Today, the PLO represents most Palestinians. It is not certain that it will represent them after an agreement. In fact the intifadah started without it, and the PLO had to change to come to an agreement. But, in the end, whoever signs will develop so that there is progress, because an agreement will not come in a day.

Sometimes, I worry more over who will be the Israeli partner.

[Question] Thank you for all the time you put into this discussion. It is not clear if a solution will come out of it, but it has brought some very interesting contributions.

[Box]

Major General (Res.) Ori Or

Former Northern Sector Commander. In that post, he was responsible for carrying out the withdrawal from Lebanon and establishing the security strip in its new form. Before that, he was the Central Sector commander. He is active in the Labor Party.

Major General (Res.) Avigdor (Yanosh) Ben-Gal

Former Northern Sector Commander. During the Lebanon War, he commanded the unit that fought in the Bika' Valley against the Syrian Army. During the Yom Kippur War, he commanded an armored unit that locked the Syrians on the Golan Heights. Today, he is active in the Labor Party.

Brigadier General (Res.) Dr Efrayim Sne

Formerly, director of the civil administration in Judea and Samaria. Before the Lebanon War, he was the liaison officer to Major Haddad and, in practice, commanded the security zone in its original form. He also was commander of an elite unit. He was the physician who accompanied the Operation Entebbe forces. He is active in the Labor Party.

Brigadier General (Res.) 'Amos 'Amir

Combat pilot. He served in various posts in the Air Force and reached the rank of deputy commander of the IAF. Today, he serves as deputy director of "El 'Al."

Brigadier General (Res.) Giyora Forman

Combat Pilot. His last post: assistant to the Chief of Staff during the Lebanon War. He filled various positions in the Air Force up to the post of deputy commander. A kibbutz member. Today, he runs a factory.

Major General (Res.) Avraham Rotem

His last post in the army: chief of the training branch of the General Staff. An armor soldier, he commanded an armored division, and during the Yom Kippur War, was commander of an armored unit that fought in Sinai.

Major General (Res.) Nati Sharoni

His last post in the IDF: chief of the planning branch of the General Staff. In that position, he was responsible for planning the structure of the IDF, its work programs, and its relations with the Pentagon. Previously, he was chief officer of the artillery corps.

13367/9274

Schiff Analyzes Current Trend of Unrest in Territories

TA1809193688 Jerusalem GOVERNMENT PRESS
OFFICE in English 18 Sep 88

[Excerpt] Nine months after it broke out, it is clear that the intifada is now at one of its important crossroads. Behind the scenes, processes are occurring that will determine how the Palestinian uprising will develop in the future. The PLO dispute over whether to establish a government-in-exile and to actually recognize Israel directly affects the residents of the territories and those involved in the uprising.

All signs indicate that most of the residents of the territories are demanding that the PLO leadership take steps as soon as possible that will allow the achievements of the intifada to find political realization. The declaration of independence in the Husayni document is one of the expressions of this. It is possible to view this as a sign of fatigue, a sort of signal that there is a limit to the rebellious populations' strength to resist; it wants to see the light at the end of the tunnel.

This can also be seen as a sign of a realistic, more moderate approach: they are paying the price of the uprising, and therefore they are interested in having the next stage be a political one.

But the PLO leadership outside the territories is, as always, having difficulty making fundamental decisions, partly because there is a price for any such decision. If a

clear stand is not taken in the coming months at the Palestine National Council on this issue, this will affect the strength of the uprising and the direction it takes.

Without such a decision, the important achievement of the intifada—which results from Jordan's disengagement from what it has always called its West Bank—will in the course of time dissolve. Jordan's supporters in the territories are undergoing a serious turnabout. Their numbers are dwindling, and even the most prominent among them are not prepared today to make a move without coordinating it with the PLO. Residents of the territories would like—and they say so—to make sure that the "gift" they received from Husayn is not poisoned. And this can only be done via political stabilization.

Other changes are being generated in the field, and not all work in Israel's favor. The fundamentalists—or "hamas," as they call themselves—are accumulating power. Religious elements have been strong in the Gaza Strip for some time, and now they are growing increasingly powerful in Judaea and Samaria as well.

This is an extremist group that does not participate in the unified leadership of the uprising. They publish their own leaflets and instructions, decide on separate strikes and memorial days, and threaten the unity of the Palestinian public. The fundamentalists are not disturbed by the question of whether to establish a provisional Palestinian government and to take political steps which will mean recognition of Israel; they oppose any compromise with it. Their approach has anti-Jewish elements mixed in. The nationalists have the upper hand, and this is a struggle likely to influence the continuation of the uprising. Even if the PLO shows a willingness for a calming of the situation, this does not insure that "hamas," which supports continuing struggle and opposes a political solution, will also be prepared for a calming.

The first period of administrative detention will end soon. Some 1,000 detainees are expected to be released from the Qetzi'ot detention camp. It is difficult to know how many of them will return to violent activity, and will add new momentum to the intifada. Many of those who were arrested for short periods at the beginning of the uprising and released have returned to activity in the framework of the intifada. There are those who say that the prolonged stay in the Negev heat will persuade many of the detainees to refrain from violent activity. According to a different point of view, despite the difficulties—and perhaps because of them—the Qetzi'ot detention camp has served as the best possible school for those involved in the uprising. A similar phenomenon occurred among the prisoners of the Jewish resistance movement as well, when they were in detention camps in Latrun, Rafi'ah, Eritrea, and Kenya: It was there that part of the underground ethos of the Jewish yishuv (pre-state Jewish community) developed. It may be that from Qetzi'ot a new kind of Palestinian rebel, even more inflexible and dangerous, will develop. The Israeli public

receives injections of encouragement from its leaders. During the last eight-and-a-half months, politicians have claimed again and again that the uprising is about to end. But it appears that the army is assessing the uprising and its development on the basis of a technical approach; that is, it is basing its assessment mainly on an "inventory": The number of large demonstrations, of petrol bombs thrown during the week, the number of stone-throwers.

It is hard to avoid the impression that reports from the field are sometimes embellished, and that in this way the social and political processes that the rebelling Palestinian population is undergoing—such as the increase in the strength of the fundamentalists, who in the long run pose a greater danger than the PLO—are being ignored. The impression has been created that the approach of others, including the Arab affairs advisers of the coordinator of activities in the territories and the three regional command headquarters, is more comprehensive and penetrating, and less optimistic concerning the future.

It can be assumed that prior to the elections, and especially during November, when there are many memorial days, that those involved in the uprising will make an effort to increase their activity. Against this background, it is also possible to understand the logic behind the IDF's pre-emptive initiatives, such as the operation in Qalqilyah. Despite the criticism abroad, the deportations will not stop; the defense establishment considers them to be the most effective weapon against the leadership of the intifada, even though they liquidate the stratum from which a leadership was likely to develop with which it would be possible to hold a dialogue.

The IDF is in control now in the territories from the standpoint of geography, but there is no doubt that the PLO, and not Israel, is the dominant element among the population. The obedience to its directives is almost automatic. The motivation to continue the intifada, chiefly among the young and middle-aged people, is undiminished.

The PLO leadership has until now failed in putting civil revolt into practice, but it is tirelessly striving to establish an infrastructure that runs parallel to that of the civil administration; institutions that strike the uprising leadership as an infrastructure for a state-in-the-making. An example of this is the medical-health care system: Medical care given free of charge has been greatly expanded, many new independent clinics have been opened, dozens of ambulances have been purchased and there has been an increase in first aid courses for residents. In this way those involved in the uprising reduce the need to go to government hospitals and prevent the authorities from keeping track of the wounded. And in this way, the sense of security of those involved in the uprising has increased.

The continuation of the intifada depends chiefly on what PLO leaders decide about their next political steps. If they continue in a deadlock, a certain frustration can be expected among those involved in the uprising, and in such a case it can be expected that after the elections more severe steps will be taken against them. On the other hand, even if the PLO takes a more moderate political path, this does not insure a calming in the territories, since the extremist religious element is growing stronger.

Treasury Chief Discusses Economic Reform

44230063b Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ Financial Supplement
in Hebrew 22 Jul 88 p 13

[Article by Tzvi Zerahiya]

[Text] "If the economic program does not take a turn for the worse, what will be needed after the elections is a broad plan to preserve stability which includes implementation of reforms in all sectors of the economy, reducing the tax burden, propelling the economy towards a process of growth, and continuing expanded productivity," says Victor Medina in a special interview for HA'ARETZ.

"After the elections, we will need to continue to apply the same policy we have been putting into effect this year. But if, God forbid, we are unable to maintain the current policy and a breach should occur in the wage sector of the state budget, that would force us at some stage to carry out a new economic policy," Medina warns.

Additional topics with which the director general of the Treasury dealt:

The Exchange Rate

"If we should fail to bring down the level of inflation to the lower levels that prevail in the Western world with which Israel does business, we will need at some point to adjust the exchange rate.

"Nonetheless, the Treasury will do everything in its power so that, if an adjustment of the exchange rate is required, it will be done without upsetting the stability of prices in the economy. We must see a change in the rate of exchange in the proper perspective. Three years ago and more, when people spoke of expectations for a devaluation, we meant an adjustment of much more than 10 percent. In January, 1987, the government carried out a 10 percent adjustment of the exchange rate while taking accompanying measures that prevented undermining price stability.

"The objective of the economic policy is to adopt appropriate budgetary and wage policies that will enable us to push back the time for adjustment of the exchange

rate and to reduce its size. If we succeed in effecting a proper budget and wage policy, we will be able to push back the time for adjusting the exchange rate."

Inflation

"To bring down the annual rate of inflation from 16 percent to 3-4 percent, we need at least 2 to 3 years."

Export Profits

"It is the right of the industrialists to come to the government with requests and demands concerning the drop in their profits, but it is also their obligation to operate their factories in a rational way. In the past 2 years, real wages in the private sector have risen more than 30 percent, and that is a very sharp rise. Firms can raise wages for their employees in their profits are high, but it is impossible for companies in difficult situations, accumulating operating losses, to permit themselves to grant such large wage bonuses. One of the conditions for stability in the economy is that salaries shall not outpace growth in productivity.

"The deterioration and erosion in profitability in the private sector primarily derive from the rise in the cost of wages that is without parallel in a properly run economy."

Wage Linkage

"We must change the mechanisms of automatic wage linkages: the agreement on supplements that assures compensation of 70 percent for accumulating rising costs, the wage creeping that grants a real supplement of 5-6 percent each year, and the minimum wage law that constitutes an automatic device for growth in wages.

"Since the level of inflation in Israel has been reduced from hundreds of a percentage per year to a yearly level of 15-20 percent, there is no longer a place for such linkage mechanisms."

Slow-Down in the Economy

"A number of indicators point to a certain slowdown in activity and local demand in the past months. It is still too early to speak of the direction of development, and we need to study developments in the economy for a period longer than 2 to 3 months. We must examine a wider spectrum of indicators in order to be able to speak with greater certainty concerning the direction of development.

"Nonetheless, a certain slowing in activity, stemming from a slowing in local demand, is not necessarily a negative thing. In a situation in which we are attempting to reduce the rate of price increases, some slowing in local activity, deriving from a drop in local demand, can indeed only aid us in our efforts. This is not a recession; in our current economic situation, we are a long way from recession."

Private Consumption

"What we must aim for is a reduction in the rate of growth in private consumption beginning in 1988-1989. The sharp growth in real wages in the business sector and the growth in private consumption in the years 1986-1987 were not healthy. The rate of growth in private consumption was actually lower at the beginning of 1988, but still not sufficiently so."

National Budget

"We are doing everything we can to contain the pressures threatening to shatter the budget plan, given that there are demands from government bureaus and various bodies in the economy to break the budget by sums estimated in the billions of sheqels. In the last 2 years, the government has succeeded in balancing the budget, and that is an achievement not just by Israeli standards, but by world standards."

Structural Change

"We have managed so far to bring about only a partial structural change in the economy. In the next few years, we must progress more quickly in changing the structure of the economy or we will be unable to continue to bring down the rate of inflation.

"So long as we go on with a yearly rate of inflation of 20 percent, the risk that inflation may rise will persist. We have begun developing and applying a long list of reforms deriving from a change in the functioning of the public sector. We intend to carry out reform of governmental imports and of the fuels economy, to deepen the reform of the currency market, and to guide reform of direct and indirect taxation."

Import Competition

"Exposing local production to competing imports is a boon to production, although it may not seem so in the short term. Gradually exposing local production to import competition will serve as an instrument for gradually inducing local production to become more efficient.

"One of the ways to improve efficiency in the economic system is to increase the productivity of local manufacturing so that it can withstand competition from imports. When we provide domestic producers too much protection, we give local industry the opportunity to submit to wage demands, since it is insulated from import competition and so able to raise prices."

Public Services

"We must apply a new policy concerning the costs of public services. The government must raise the real cost of services it provides the public, such as land, water, education, health, and others."

Process of Recovery

"The economic policy for this year is designed to operate on two levels: to preserve and strengthen the stability of prices and the stability of the balance of payments. We would not want to succeed in one goal at the expense of the other and the only course for attaining the two objectives together is a proper budget and wage policy. The government needs to continue to maintain its credibility in the eyes of the public. It must continue to define and realize an economic policy that will carry on the process of economic recovery."

13367/9274

Knesset Considers Issue of Drafting Religious Men

44230063a Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 21 Jul 88 p 3

[Article by Tova Tzimogi]

[Text] By a majority of 17 votes from Labor Alignment, Likud, and the religious parties; against 14 votes from the left, MERKAZ, and Rafa'el Eytan from TZOMET; the Knesset rejected three proposals, sponsored by Amnon Rubenstein, Yosi Sarid and Ya'ir Tzaban, for a law that would subject students of religious seminaries to compulsory army service.

Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin said that the Defense Ministry is studying the recent ruling of the Supreme Court on the matter of seminary students. Rabin added that a subcommittee of the foreign affairs and defense committee of the Knesset will present its recommendations to the full committee, and only then will it be possible to take up the issue. He reminded the representatives that the decision regarding seminary students was adopted by the entire government when the country was founded and reflects the policy of the current government as well.

Knesset member [MK] Yosi Sarid revealed to the Knesset that, in each draft period, 5.5 percent are not enrolled but receive deferrals. He also disclosed that in 1986, only 0.5 percent of all those who received a deferral entered regular services. Of those with service deferrals, 1.6 percent entered some kind of military service. Sarid called the seminary students who evade the army "scoundrels by permission of the Torah even as they are scoundrels by permission of the government. If Israeli society does not wipe out the stain of parasitism, this ugly stain will wipe out Israeli society. The young seminary students are willing to suck the blood of the state like leeches, but are not willing to enter the nation's blood stream like any good fellow. The Government of Israel at this time seeks to investigate the members of 'Yesh Gvul', but has no demands of those who have passed beyond every traditional limit." Sarid called upon every Israeli citizen: "Only you are able to remove this shame from our life. Every Israeli citizen must

promise himself that he will not vote in the coming elections for any party that does not clearly pledge itself to drafting seminary students."

MK Amnon Rubenstein of MERKAZ cited the ruling of the President of the Supreme Court, Ma'ir Shamgar, on the matter of drafting seminary students. Rubenstein said that defense ministers from the Likud and the Alignment have made the obligation of military service, which is hallowed even as a matter of religious law, a mere matter of business. MK Ya'ir Tzaban from MAPAM proposed that, in the future, the defense minister be able to postpone enlistment of seminary students into the military for a period of 4 years at the most, and to require as a condition for this that the applicant go through enlistment procedures and accept the obligation of going through basic training for 2 years from the day he receives the deferral. "The existing arrangement creates a blatant inequality, treating one man's blood differently from another's. We must wipe it off the face of the earth. He who is responsible for the evasion of tens of thousands of seminary students from IDF service is destroying the traditional authority for opposing those soldiers who refuse to serve in the territories."

By majority vote, the Knesset also rejected the "counter proposal" of MK Geula Kohen of "TEHIYA," which called for drafting Arabs for IDF service. According to her, it is unthinkable that a citizen should be entitled to all the privileges and exempt from all the obligations. A law of national service would parallel the obligation of military service and require full service of 3 years in civilian domains, upon which the minister for labor and social welfare would decide. Kohen proposed that the penalty for failure to comply with the law of national service would be denial of the right to vote and to be elected. In reply, Rafa'el Pinhasy, deputy minister of labor and social welfare, said that it was necessary to reject the proposed law because adoption of it was liable to cause complications of such a nature that they would exceed the benefits.

Parliamentary Questions

Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin said that, since 9 December, 1987, 4,570 people have been charged in military courts in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza. So far, cases have been concluded for 2,708 of those accused. Some 1,200 accused persons are being held by military court order in Judea and Samaria until conclusion of the legal proceedings against them. In the Gaza Strip, about 200 detainees are awaiting completion of the proceedings. Rabin stated further that, since April, the intifadah has caused almost no damage to IDF training programs. This was accomplished by placing the heavy burden [of service in the territories] on reservists in order to assure that the army could maintain its preparation for war.

MK Dedi Zucker and MK Amnon Rubenstein expressed satisfaction with Rabin's announcement in reply to a parliamentary question that, beginning 1 January, 1989,

a legal authority will be established in the territories to dispose of appeals from the military courts. The two Knesset members have been working for some time to grant the right of appeal to the inhabitants of the territories; the right is a basic one, the absence of which until now has struck hard at the principles of the rule of law and of human rights. MK Rubenstein raised this subject before the defense minister again during his time as a minister in the government. The two Knesset members called upon the defense minister to return the judicial censorship over the administrative detainees in the territories to its previous scope.

13367/9274

Polio Virus Found in Sewage Water

Hadera Region Declared Infected

TA2209204288 Jerusalem GOVERNMENT PRESS
OFFICE in English 22 Sep 88

[Excerpt] "YEDI'OT AHARONOT p 1: Dvora Namir reports that a virulent strain of polio virus has been detected in samples of sewage water taken from 20 locations in the Hadera region. An especially high concentration has been found in Or Aqiva and Umm al-Fahm. The area has been declared an infected region.

Health Ministry Begins Vaccination Campaign

TA2009132688 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 20 Sep 88 p 1

[Excerpts] Residents of Hadera and the surrounding areas who are 35 years old and younger will be vaccinated against polio, after the polio virus was found in sewage in the area, health minister Shoshana Arbeli-Almoslino announced at a press conference here last night. The press conference was held the day after the sixth and seventh cases of polio were confirmed. Most of the victims have mild or relatively mild cases, but the first two victims remain in very serious condition. She stressed, however, that the current vaccination campaign is largely preventive because over 97 percent of the population has either natural or acquired immunity to the virus. The difficulty in finding those that are not immune, prompted the health authorities to vaccinate everyone.

JORDAN

Article Shows Statistics for Trade With Arab Countries

44040391 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic
23 Aug 88 p 4

[Text] Amman—The value of Jordan's exports to the Arab common market countries during the first 2 months of this year totalled 18.151 million dinars compared with 7.454 million dinars during the same period last year.

Official statistics show that the value of Jordan's imports from the Arab common market countries during the first 2 months of this year totalled 20.777 million compared with 17.89 million dinars of imports from these countries during the same period last year.

Egypt

The figures show that Jordan's imports from Egypt during the first 2 months of this year totalled 602,000 dinars compared with 953,000 dinars during the same period last year. As for Jordan's exports to Egypt during January and February 1988, they totalled 1.487 million dinars compared with 2.328 million dinars during the same period last year.

Iraq

The value of Jordan's exports to Iraq during the first 2 months of this year totalled 15.707 million dinars compared with 4.692 million dinars during the same period last year.

As for the value of Jordan's imports from Iraq during the first 2 months of 1988, they totalled about 19.180 million dinars compared with 15.809 million dinars during the same period last year.

Syria

Official figures show that the value of Jordan's exports to Syria during the first 2 months of this year increased to 943,000 dinars from 314,000 dinars during the same period last year.

The value of Jordan's imports from Syria during the same period has increased to 995,000 dinars compared with 683,000 dinars during the same period last year.

Trade with the Arab countries during the first 2 months of this year totalled 23.6 million dinars, of which Jordan's exports to them totalled 6.935 million dinars and imports from them totalled 16.125 million dinars.

Lebanon

The figures show that during the first 2 months of this year Jordan's exports to Lebanon totalled 132,000 dinars compared with 79,000 dinars during the same period last year, while Jordan's imports from Lebanon totalled 885,000 dinars compared with 1.070 million dinars last year.

Saudi Arabia

Statistics show that the value of Jordan's exports to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia during the first 2 months of this year totalled 3.042 million dinars compared with 3.782 million dinars during the same period last year.

As for the value of Jordan's imports from Saudi Arabia during January and February of this year, they totalled 12.311 million dinars compared with 10.609 million dinars during the same period last year

Kuwait

During the first 2 months of this year Jordan's exports to Kuwait totalled 1.685 million dinars compared with 1.230 million dinars during the same period last year, while Jordan's imports from Kuwait totalled 1.217 million dinars compared with 144,000 dinars during the same period last year.

Bahrain

During the first 2 months of this year Jordan's exports to Bahrain totalled 259,000 dinars compared with 517,000 dinars during the same period last year, while Jordan's imports from Bahrain totalled 498,000 dinars compared with 11,000 dinars during the same period last year.

Qatar

The figures show that during the first 2 months of this year Jordan's exports to Qatar totalled 458,000 dinars compared with 211,000 dinars during the same period last year, while Jordan's imports from Qatar totalled 637,000 dinars compared with 223,000 dinars during the same period last year.

The UAE

During the first 2 months of this year, Jordan's exports to the UAE totalled 812,000 dinars compared with 50,000 dinars during the same period last year, while Jordan's imports from the UAE totalled 135,000 dinars compared with 47,000 dinars during the same period last year.

Trade Volume With the Arab Countries

Totalling up the figures of foreign trade with the Arab common market countries and the other Arab countries shows that the value of foreign trade with the Arab countries in question during the first 2 months of this year totalled 61.988 million dinars, of which 25.086 million dinars were Jordanian exports to these countries and 36.902 million dinars were Jordanian imports from these countries.

13305

Central Bank Report Discusses Status of Economy *44040345 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic* 10 Jul 88 p 4

[Text] The Research and Studies Division of the Jordanian Central Bank prepared a paper on the economic state of affairs and investment incentives in Jordan to be presented to the 4th Jordanian Expatriate Conference.

The paper pointed out that the Jordanian economy is a mixed system based primarily on the free economy concept while enabling the government to intervene whenever necessary.

The paper said that by implementing consecutive economic and social development plans, Jordan has realized memorable accomplishments. The paper stated that Jordan's population growth rate is high, 3.9 percent annually, where the East Bank's population of 2.91 million includes a high percentage of young people.

Regarding the Jordanian job market, the paper described it as both a labor-importing and exporting market where the kingdom's total work force in 1987 was estimated at about 658,000 workers, 103,000 or 16 percent of whom are foreign, while the number of Jordanians working abroad is estimated at about 330,000. A higher demand for Jordanian labor during the second half of the seventies led to higher wages and an influx of foreign labor to Jordan. In the first half of the eighties, the country's growth rate went up and the rate of demand fell back, giving rise to the unemployment phenomenon and bringing down the private sector's wage level.

About the educational system in Jordan, the paper pointed out that it is marked by a high student population ratio of 34.2 percent.

As for natural materials, the paper talked about water, energy and mineral resources such as phosphates, potash and certain building materials.

The paper also talked about production, pointing out that the national economy is marked by the way it is influenced by economic and financial developments in neighboring Arab countries and by great flexibility and the ability to adopt to economic changes in these countries with their ups and downs. Jordan has maintained an annual growth rate of 3.5 percent at fixed prices during 1980-85.

The paper then dealt with the agricultural sector and its significance and characteristics and went on to discuss the industrial and mining sector, the construction sector and the services sectors.

Regarding consumption and savings, the paper made mention of the higher income from local and national revenues and increased consumption which exceeded the gross local product, thus raising the demand for consumer goods and, therefore, a greater volume of imports, blind consumption and negative local savings.

The paper also covered foreign trade, highlighting the fact that it occupies an especially important place in the national economy by showing that the volume of its goods and services constitute 93.6 percent of the GNP and exported goods represent the largest part of national

exports, making up 71 percent of total exports for 1987 while commodities imports represent about two-thirds of imported goods and services.

Phosphate, potash and fertilizer exports represent about 48 percent of the total commodities exports for 1987 and foodstuffs and livestock exports make up 14 percent of total exports. Arab countries import about 52.3 percent of total national exports.

As for the government's general financial position, the paper said it is marked by a shortfall between total revenues and central government expenditures. This shortfall is caused by a drop in local revenues which are still unable to cover current expenditures even though they rose from 67.3 percent in 1980 to about 91 percent in 1987.

The paper explained that financing for capital spending continued to depend on aid and foreign and domestic loans, pointing out that indirect taxes constituted 48.4 percent of total local revenues for 1987.

It also mentioned that the banking sector registered the highest growth from the early seventies up to the present time.

The paper dealt with economic developments in 1987 whereby the growth rate of the gross local product at current prices is expected to range between 2 and 3 percent, the same as in the two previous years, and dwindling expatriate remittances will cause a slight drop in the GNP.

The paper mentioned that some sectors have experienced tangible improvements, such as the strategic industry sector, the processing industry, the agricultural sector, electricity, water and energy products.

Among the positive signs that Jordan witnessed last year and for the first time in a quarter of a century is the drop in the general price level. The standard cost of living has dropped 0.3 percent due to a drop in local demand.

As for the money index, there was an increase in the money supply growth rates in 1987. The growth rate of local liquidity rose from 10.5 percent in 1986 to 14.5 percent in 1987.

Regarding general finances, revised 1987 figures show a rise in the central government general revenues at a rate three times greater than the growth rate in general expenditures. General revenues amounted to 804.2 million Jordanian dinars, an 8.8 percent increase over 1986. As for general expenditures, they amounted to 1,008.7 million dinars for this year, a 2.8 percent increase over 1986.

Local revenues for 1987 amounted to about 549.7 million dinars, a 6.9 percent increase over 1986.

The increase in revenues has led to a rise in the local revenue coverage of current expenditures. Current expenditures for last year amounted to 604.5 million dinars, a 6 percent increase over the 1986 level.

Capital outlay amounted to about 404.2 million dinars, which represents a 1.6 percent drop.

Developments in general revenues and expenditures resulted in a deficit of 204.5 million dinars compared to 242.4 million for last year.

As for foreign debts, the unpaid balance as of the end of 1987 was about 1,261.6 million dinars, a 5.5 percent increase over 1986. This increase is attributed to changes in foreign currency exchange rates. The amount drawn in 1987 amounted to 116.3 million and payments (capital plus interest) amounted to 190.7 million dinars.

As for the foreign trade sector, it has experienced tangible improvement with the foreign trade volume rising by 8.2 percent as compared to a 19.1 percent drop in 1986. Total exports went up 23.2 million or 10.3 percent over the 1986 level, while the value of imports went up 65.3 million or 7.7 percent.

This rise in imports centered on crude oil which registered an increase of 27.7 percent. The paper also included the directives of the third 5-year plan and an explanation of investment opportunities available in Jordan in the various sectors, in addition to investment incentives in Jordan.

12502

OMAN

Cooperation Protocol Signed With Japan 44040344 Muscat *UMAN in Arabic* 8 Jul 88 p 2

[Article by Muhammad Darwish]

[Text] A cooperation protocol was signed yesterday morning between the government of Oman and the government of Japan. His Excellency Salim Ibn-Muhammad Sha'ban, undersecretary of state for oil and minerals, signed for the government of Oman and Mr Takashi Azuma, director general of the Japanese International Mining Agency, signed for the government of Japan. The signing of this protocol was part of cooperation activities between the two governments. According to this agreement, the Japanese will prepare an economic feasibility study on two copper deposit sites: al-Raki and Hayl al-Safil in the district of Yanqul in al-Zahirah. This vital project, which will be totally financed by the Japanese government, will take two years to complete, during which time geological and geophysical studies will be conducted, underground diamond drilling will be undertaken and appropriate engineer designs for mines and technical specifications for equipment to be used in the extraction and treatment of ores will be drawn up.

The study is designed primarily to determine the feasibility of mining these ores from an economic point of view after determining the cost of production and the price of produced material. It is noteworthy that the ores will feed the Suhar copper project, thus extending its life and making good use of its facilities.

Besides this economic study, the project will include a 1-month course of technical field training in the sultanate and practical training in Japan for a number of Omani cadres.

The al-Raki site was discovered in 1976 while the Hayl al-Safil site was discovered during implementation of the second 5-year plan which included coverage of vast areas in the sultanate, geological mapping and mineral prospecting. Reserves at both sites are estimated at about 4 million tons of copper ore.

This project falls within the framework of existing cooperation between the two friendly countries which was inaugurated in 1980 by the implementation of a number of projects for geological mapping and mineral prospecting, including a geological mapping project in the southern Mirbat-Hasik region and prospecting for magnesium in Ra's al-Had region.

One Million Yen Cost of Project

Engineer Muhammad Bin-Husayn Qasim, director general of the General Mining Division, said that work on the project will start with the beginning of the new field season and will last 2 years. A number of Omani technicians will take part in the various survey operations and, at the end of each season, an Omani geologist will go to Japan to assess work progress there.

Muhammad Ibn-Husayn Qasim added that the project will cost 700,000 riyals, 2 million yen, to be paid in total by the Japanese government.

He also said that the project aims to discover more reserves and to prepare an economic feasibility study with a view to extending the life of the copper project in Suhar. It also aims to train national cadres and step up cooperation between specialized departments in the Ministry of Oil and Minerals and Japanese government agencies, particularly since the Japanese have had long experience in this field. The possibility of taking advantage of this expertise by transferring it to Omani technicians so that they may gain new experience which they can apply in prospecting and evaluation operations in the sultanate will also be discussed.

According to this agreement as well, the Japanese side will donate 40,000 riyals worth of equipment deemed necessary by the General Mining Division.

Muhammad Ibn-Husayn Qasim concluded by saying: "The benefit that national cadres taking part in implementation of the project acquire and the expertise that

they gain are the most important objectives of any project we undertake, be it financed directly by the sultanate or in cooperation with friendly countries."

Mr Takashi Azuma, general director of the Japanese International Agency, stated that the Japanese team had made two inspection visits to the project site in al-Raki and Hayl al-Safil, one in February of this year and one in July. He added that he hoped that the project would yield good results that can contribute to the achievement of the objectives for which it was set up.

12502

SUDAN

Government To Return Ethiopian Warplanes
JN2209192288 Khartoum SUNA in English
1715 GMT 22 Sep 88

[Text] Today military sources announced that the Sudanese Government has agreed to hand back some military planes which entered Sudan during the past couple of years by Ethiopian military pilots looking for political asylum.

The military source said that the Sudan has taken the move in a bid to better relations between the two countries and [make] a good gesture in this respect.

SYRIA

Consumers Criticize Shortages, Authorities
44040310 Damascus AL-THAWRAH in Arabic
6 Jul 88 p 8

[Article by Salim 'Isa]

[Text] The hardships and difficulties being experienced in the district of Hamah today stem from several problems, foremost of which is the shortage of locally manufactured tobacco and its sale at prices higher than those on the official price list. At the same time black market tobacco is dominating the market. The supply control authority is ineffectual on one hand and is failing to control the greedy ones and the violators of law on the other. There is another urgent problem that is no less important than others, which is the relationship between the citizen and the police. This involves responsibility toward the citizen, caring for him, and respecting him; it also concerns the citizen's responsibility not to violate laws and regulations, which is primarily in the public interest as well as the citizen's interest. There is also the problem of lack of public transportation and the steep fares. This calls for taking the initiative to put an end to the problem of crowding passengers in the buses and dealing with the problem of steep fares and the greed of

some of vehicle owners. All these are basic problems from which the citizen is suffering and will continue to suffer as long as they are not dealt with laws and regulations. Let us look at these problems:

In Hamah it is difficult for the citizen to obtain any kind of our locally manufactured cigarettes; that is with the exception of what is being offered by boy vendors near the water mills, which is normally double the price.

Despite the disappearance of the local cigarettes, our local correspondent says, other cigarettes are available in the black market. It appears that several reasons have led to this crisis, foremost of which is the fact that the official price list fixes the price of local cigarettes but does not deal with the brands available in the black market. Is there no solution to this problem and when will our local cigarettes become available?

The problem of locally manufactured cigarettes seems also to becoming more acute daily in Masyaf and the villages around it. Smokers have problems with the shopkeepers because of their greed and refusal to sell locally manufactured cigarettes. Some of these shopkeepers receive their allocation of cigarettes and sell them wholesale before they come to the shop. When asked about cigarettes a shopkeeper would say that the tobacco authority did not give him any cigarettes. Meanwhile black market cigarettes are plentiful. We have raised the question of cigarettes several time but we could never obtain a solution or a convincing answer. Has the supply authority branch in Masyaf tried to tackle the dealers and capture the violators? What initiative has it taken in order to seize black market cigarettes?

With regard to the supply authority, our local correspondent number 80759 confirms that there is lack of control of commodities in Masyaf. Shopkeepers and their likes exploit the lack of control and sell commodities at prices according to their whims. Bread is sold at prices that differ between one outlet and another. Whole beans and ground beans are sold at higher prices than the official price.

It is observed that supply patrols in Misyaf never recorded a single violation. They wait for the citizens to complain and then start consulting among themselves. Is this control or what?

Information available to us confirms that the Masyaf supply control unit did not record a single violation on its own during the month of Ramadan and the holidays, except those cases reported to them by the citizens. Will the supply directorate in Hamah take steps in order to study the situation and may be take some action?

On another occasion, on 7 May 1988 a police patrol from al-Humayri police station of the Harb Nafsah district came to 'Aqrab grocery shop which is owned by Muhammad 'Abd al-Khalid. The patrol wanted to buy butter. When the shopkeeper refused the patrol's request for

justifiable reasons, the policemen insulted the shopkeeper. A heated argument took place but the matter did not end here. The following day the shopkeeper was summoned to the police station where he was beaten and insulted. The shopkeeper said that the patrol had no business to do what it did and no officer was aware of the matter. He wonders who is responsible for such actions? We would like to point out here that we have a written statement by the shopkeeper on the incident.

In yet another development, on 25 March 1988 citizen 'Umar Hasan al-Hasan accompanied 'Umar Bayirli, who was a witness to a girl rape incident in 'Aqrab village, to the office of the Harb Nafsah district officer in order to testify that the actual culprit who committed the rape was a certain person and not so and so. When 'Umar Hasan al-Hasan faced the district officer he related to him the incident as witnessed by witness Bayirli. The district officer told him that his statement is rejected and struck him with a pomegranate tree stick. He then threw him in the water pond in the office's courtyard. 'Umar al-Hasan returned to his village wet, according to our local correspondent Muhammad al-Khadr.

The question is: Is this reasonable, you Harb Nafsah district officer? Don't you know that the citizen is our most precious asset?

We then leave Harb Nafsah to Salmiyah area to hear another story. The inhabitants of al-Mab'ujah village are suffering from the drivers' greed who charge transport fares arbitrarily with nobody to stop them. Recently the passenger fare reached as much as 8 Syrian pounds, bearing in mind that the distance between Salmiyah and al-Mab'ujah is no more than 21 KM. Our local correspondent number 6598 says that scores of employees are obliged to commute to Salmiyah and back, which means that every one of them has to pay 16 pounds daily, that is, half of the salary in this case will go for transportation costs, which is unreasonable.

Why do the authorities concerned not intervene in order to deal with this problem and resolve it in the citizens' interest?

We move from transportation to the production of handmade rugs which the al-Irshadiyah unit for rug manufacturing in 'Aqrab village produces. The rugs produced are of good quality, durable, and elegant, thanks to the efforts of the female workers in this unit. Nevertheless, our correspondent Sulayman al-Khadr says that the directorate of social and labor affairs in Hamah never praised such efforts. On the contrary, it imposed a fine, so to speak, which was tantamount to punishing the working girls. The reason was the deficiency of the "stuffing" material, which usually comes deficient in weight [as published]. Is it permissible to blame the working girls for something that is not their fault? What is the ministry of social and labor affairs opinion in this matter?

With regard to cleanliness, about a year ago we pointed out the dinginess and filth in al-Bayadiyah village. Nothing has changed ever since. What are the reasons, Masyaf municipality? Just a question and no more!

Moving from hardships to problems, we point out that al-Bustan village is only 5 km from Masyaf. This village is extremely beautiful, according to our correspondent Sulayman al-Khadr, and in it there are fruit trees everywhere. This village's farmers are characterized by their diligence and hard work. Yet the village suffers from lack of clean potable water. The village's drinking water project was completed 5 years ago and there remains only to install the pipes. The inhabitants also complain that minibus owners are exploiting them. They also demand the setting up of an outlet for the sale of commodities and an agricultural guidance unit. Will their demands be met and their problems be solved?

A quick review of these problems makes it clear beyond any doubt that proper handling of these problems and daily hardships which the citizens suffer ought to be dealt with by immediate and practical solutions. This has been the demand. Urgent steps must be taken in order to put things right.

We hope that the authorities concerned in Hamah province will take the initiative to do so in the service of the citizen. This is our hope.

13305

TUNISIA

President Ben Ali Discusses Plans for Coming Elections

81193166 Paris LE MONDE in French
10 Sep 88 pp 1-3

[Interview with President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali by Andre Fontaine, Jacques Amalric and Michel Deure at the Carthage Palace in September 1988]

[Text] Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali is scheduled to arrive in Paris on Monday, 12 September for a 3-day official visit. This is the first such visit he has paid to a non-Arab country since he succeeded President Bourguiba on 7 November 1987. It is being said in Paris that the welcome given him will represent "the confirmation of French support of the process of democratization he has launched." In the interview he granted us at the Carthage Palace just prior to this trip, President Ben Ali announced, among other things, the organizational plans for the presidential and legislative elections scheduled for 7 November 1989, which are designed to ensure that "the popular will can be expressed."

[Question] One year after taking office, what assessment would you make of your actions?

[Answer] We are still 20 months short of the first anniversary of my installation in government office. But in 10 months, the rate of change has been so rapid that the nightmare Tunisia was experiencing a little less than a year ago has literally been erased from the collective memory. If there is an assessment to be made, it is indeed this which should be noted first.

We see in fact that Tunisians are regaining their pride today. Despite the economic difficulties, they are surviving the situation without worry and are looking to the future with confidence and optimism. They have acquired the certainty that the future is henceforth their responsibility. Tunisia will be what they want it to be.

What we have undertaken to date is a part, first of all, of a vast national reconciliation project. We are determined to reconcile the state and its institutions with the rule of law and with society as a whole, to reconcile society with its culture, its heritage and its history. And we are concerned about reconciling the country with its geopolitical environment. It is within this framework that we are attempting to promote authentic Tunisian patriotism, and this is why we place the 7 November movement at the heart of our national history.

And then, we want to give the citizens back their voice, to develop a spirit of tolerance, a civic sense and a love of public affairs. The great democratization program is a product of this vision. Diverse opinions, differences and even disagreements are inherent in modern any society. The role of the state and its institutions is first of all and basically to provide the framework for negotiation and agreement, to create the conditions for a developing and constantly renewed consensus.

[Question] Isn't the relaunching of the economy also a requirement?

[Answer] Yes, and we are working to pull together the conditions for a healthy and enduring recovery in economic activity.

That having been said, we are ambitious for our country, and we want our people to be the artisans of a great national renewal and development project. Our country is rich in capabilities. We have a good number of trump cards with which to meet the challenges of development. However, much remains to be done, and the work of recovery will be pursued without respite.

The national pact in which we have invited the political forces, the associations and the elite groups in this country to participate is designed to create the conditions needed for enrichment of the process launched and the broadest possible propagation of it throughout the social fabric, the regional and local levels included. Democratization is in fact the prerequisite for the mobilization of the energies and the resources of our people, we believe. It is in this spirit as well that we have returned his dignity to the citizen and implemented

multiple measures to defend and safeguard the rights of man and the state of law and to include democratization in our social reality. You will see that the impasse in which the country found itself less than a year ago is now far behind us.

'We Were Ashamed'

[Question] What are the factors which you brought into the institutional process in November 1987?

[Answer] You will recall, because both LE MONDE and the international press as a whole bore witness to it, that the state was, for all intents and purposes, cut off from society; internal plotting had taken the place of politics; the government and the administration were trapped in inefficiency; the party in power had been reduced to the level of a militia, and an impotent one, at that; the universities were experiencing terrible paralysis, and hundreds of students had joined the Army; the trade unions had been dismantled and the political parties, which were recognized in theory, were struggling along under intimidation; the opposition or, very simply independent, press was frequently muzzled; and the rights of man were being flouted. And all of this, of course, against the background of an acute economic and financial crisis.

In the end, the people abandoned their efforts and became resigned, with a sort of historic fatalism. In short, the people of Tunisia were impotent witnesses to the sad spectacle of the decline of the state and its institutions. They were in the process of losing faith in their country, and those contemplating emigration or even rejection of their nationality were legion. There were many Tunisians abroad who had fled the arbitrary regime.

The citizens no longer had confidence in their system of representation, in their courts, in their educational system, in their economic enterprises or in their media. The image of Tunisia had changed drastically, even in the Western press, which had generally been very understanding of the Bourguiba regime.

We were ashamed of our country.

I cultivate the qualities of clarity and frankness. Why should I not tell you that I never imagined that I would one day occupy one of the leading state posts? It is a secret to no one that I was in the Army and that Bourguiba always viewed the Army with great suspicion. My personal history bears witness to the gradual hardening of the regime and its increasing remoteness from civilian society. Therefore, when Bourguiba asked me to serve as prime minister, it was very probably because it was in his mind to impose upon me a program for intimidating society, with extreme repression.

Now, while I was trained to cultivate the qualities of discipline and order, and I remain committed to them, I have never had a taste for repression. That is why, having seen the dangerous impasse in which my country found itself, there was no alternative for me but to pledge my efforts to rescuing the country from this situation, or to resign. I did what duty dictated, in the strictest respect for the provisions of the constitution and with respect for the ethnic values which are the pride of our people.

[Question] When did you make your decision?

[Answer] Certain facts in particular astounded me and faced me with my responsibilities. It was as if Bourguiba had suffered sudden amnesia, and his moments of clarity were becoming infrequent. It was thus that he could forget and reject what he had decided upon the previous day. The state was in danger of losing credibility. For example, the chief of state wanted to dismiss ministers he had appointed just the day before.

After my recall to the Ministry of Interior in 1984, and after what was termed the "bread rebellion," I witnessed the degeneration of the state. The institutions had been dismantled or stripped of their content. The country had thus been abandoned to an almost anarchic state and to the inevitable development of violence.

In fact, violence was brewing.

Bourguiba's Fate

And then I was seeing the chief of state every day, and I could thus assess the point to which his state of health was deteriorating and his intellectual capacities were dwindling. The country was not being governed, and there was a danger that it would become ungovernable. I also witnessed the excessive development of the obsession with repression in this man who had been a great political leader. For example, he insisted on retrying the fundamentalists in order to get them sentenced to death.

I was terribly sad for my country and for this man who was without question a great patriot, a great leader and a prestigious chief of state. Age had triumphed over his genius. In short, this was a great catastrophe.

[Question] Is it true that at that time, you confided to some of your intimates that you did not want to be another General Garbay? (General Garbay was the commander in chief of the French troops in Tunisia, and he gained particular renown during the sweeps of the Cap-Bon region in 1952.)

[Answer] Yes, and I had great difficulty in limiting the devastation.

[Question] Do you favor the death penalty?

[Answer] I oppose it. Moreover, there has not been a single execution since 7 November 1987, and I definitely cannot see myself signing an execution order.

[Question] What living conditions were provided for President Bourguiba?

[Answer] Excellent ones, and with justification. Bourguiba is receiving the treatment deserved by a man who rendered great service to the nation, before and after independence was won.

He has available to him everything which a man of his age and condition could need—suitable lodging, with household staff, the usual medical personnel and regular examinations by his personal physicians, with the state totally covering all of the costs, in addition to a pension equal to the amount he received as president of the republic.

The provision of these things for the first president of the Tunisian republic bears witness to our recognition of the actions of the leader he was, and our respect for the essence of his work at the head of the state.

[Question] It is being said that the former president might be transferred from his residence in Mornag, near Tunis, to his native city, Monastir.

[Answer] It is true that he has asked to live in Monastir, and arrangements are under way to prepare the former residence of the governor to accommodate him, where he will be able to settle soon.

[Question] Have you seen him since 7 November?

[Answer] No, but I spoke to him once on the telephone and he has written to me several times.

[Question] What precisely is the status of Mr Mzali, the former prime minister who was sentenced in absentia and who sought asylum in Europe? Will he be able to return to Tunisia?

[Answer] He can return whenever he wants—I said so just recently to his wife—and I guarantee that he will not go to prison. But in order to regularize his situation, he needs only to file an appeal against the judgments on the basis of which he was sentenced, which he refuses to do.

Early Elections

[Question] The process of democratization which is under way should lead to the achievement of a national pact. In your view, should the multiparty system you urge lead to the creation of a presidential majority?

[Answer] In my mind, things appear a little differently. The national pact is not the outcome of the process of democratization, but represents a stage in and, let us say, one of the conditions for, deepening it.

We are fully aware of the fact that democratization is not merely a complex of texts. It presumes a code of conduct, rules of the game and collective discipline. There is, therefore, an aspect which is not specified in the legal texts and which, for other countries with a long democratic tradition, is the product of slow historical maturation. It is our desire to make this aspect which is not set forth in the legal texts explicit through the national pact.

The presidential majority of which you speak is the inevitable consequence of the process of democratization and the multiparty system. As you know, I am president of the Democratic Constitutional Rally. But I am also, and above all, the chief of state, and as such, I make every effort to be the president of all Tunisian citizens, without exclusion. The state stands above the parties, including the party in power. Thus I am working through my actions to develop a system of symbols for the state consistent with its irreversible reconciliation with society.

[Question] The draft reform of the electoral code would not change the system providing for a single round of balloting for the majority slate with other parties on the same ticket, which would undeniably work to the benefit of the Democratic Constitutional Rally (formerly PSD). Isn't this a serious handicap for the opposition, which remains quite unstructured on the regional level?

[Answer] Matters are somewhat different from what you suggest. In fact, we have postponed the reform of the voting system until after the partial legislative elections which will be held in 20 or 25 districts in January of 1989. For the choices are numerous, and points of view differ, and we do not have sufficient data to undertake the debate on a rational basis. We chose to retain the old electoral code as it is. And it should be said in passing that it has never really been tested.

Thus we have proposed organizing partial legislative elections in the majority of the regions in the country in order to obtain the pertinent data which will be used to organize an informed discussion of the balloting method, with a view to achieving a consensus on the matter. This is what is really the issue in the coming partial legislative election. The political stakes will await the outcome of the early general elections which will be held less than a year later, doubtless on 7 November 1989, as is proper.

We want real elections, with no betrayal of the will of the people, and we want the citizens of Tunisia to be proud of the conduct of their administration, in the end. I have already stated publicly and solemnly that I will personally see to the regularity of the election proceedings.

[Question] Do you envisage early presidential elections because under the terms of the old constitution, you could remain president until November 1991?

[Answer] Yes, exactly. The only legitimacy comes from the will of the people expressed through universal suffrage. This is true first and foremost for the presidential post. I can even tell you that the presidential election will be held at the same time as the early general legislative elections, and will thus take place on 7 November 1989.

[Question] Is it your intention to recognize the existence of the fundamentalist movement as an opposition party?

[Answer] Why not, if those who claim to be its adherents abide strictly by the provisions of the law on parties, and if they adhere to the norms and the rules which will be made explicit in the national pact, which we expect to announce next 7 November?

But your question should also be addressed to the supporters of this movement. Is it their intention to establish themselves as a political party? Is it their intention to renounce their claim to the right to dictate religious and excommunication rules? Are they prepared to accept the norms and values of a pluralistic democracy?

The recognition of a party which would be the heir to the movement with a fundamentalist inclination (unlike the recognition of any other movement) poses a problem for the country, and not on the government level alone, because a suspicion of duplicity hovers over this movement.

This is to say that a fundamentalist movement, if it wants to be recognized, should offer tangible proof of its support of democratic principles. I think I am justified in saying that there are a certain number of positive indications which it remains for us, as well as the rest of the democratic public, to encourage.

Fundamentalist Values

[Question] This movement is split into various factions, some of which remain radical. Do you not fear that in "rehabilitating" fundamentalist values, you will be providing grist for the mill of the integrists? Do you think that this latter group has really abandoned its intention of seizing power?

[Answer] It would be better to speak of the rehabilitation of Islamic or religious values, rather than fundamentalist values.

But to answer your question, I would like to point to the extreme tension which characterized relations between the state and the fundamentalists prior to 7 November, threatening to pervert the state and its institutions. There was a great danger of a serious slippage in our political system at that time. With the logic of confrontation contributing, the government was imperceptibly

led to suspect a simple manifestation of faith. A dangerous polarization began to develop, with the first indications of the isolation of the regime in society and a real threat to public freedoms in this country, including freedom of conscience.

What you call the rehabilitation of fundamentalist values is nothing in fact but a complex of measures designed to get the country out of this rut. For the Tunisian people are very sincerely committed to their religion and to the values it represents. The steps we have taken represent, in a way, just homage rendered to Islam, and recognition of the entirely prestigious role it has played in the history of our people. These steps have allowed us to win back many practicing Muslims who had shown an increasing tendency to adopt an extremist attitude. The people of Tunisia, almost in their entirety, are not fanatics.

[Question] And you yourself, have you always been a practicing Muslim?

[Answer] Yes. Just as I am a nationalist, but not to excess, I am a practicing Muslim, but I reject all fanaticism.

[Question] The fact nonetheless remains that some people have interpreted the imposition of certain religious measures as a concession to the fundamentalists.

[Answer] It is true that what we have done has not been free of errors and misunderstandings, and you are right to note certain fears in connection with interpretation. Some people have talked about an undertaking designed to cut the ground from under the feet of the fundamentalists, while others have spoken of compromise with them. In fact, what we have done has been designed to reassure people about respect for their faith and thus to prevent, insofar as possible, any risk that Islam might be used for partisan purposes or as a tool in the struggle to win power. It was necessary to indicate clearly that the state has no bone to pick with Islam. Quite the contrary.

It is true that the fundamentalist movement in Tunisia is divided into various factions, some of which remain and probably will remain the adversaries of democracy. But I think that essentially, the Tunisian fundamentalist movement has appropriate characteristics. In a statement made to the Tunisian daily AL-SABAH (LE MONDE, 23 July) just recently, a little more than a month ago, the leader of the main component of this movement gave answers deemed satisfactory and conciliatory to the questions which are justifiably of concern to the political and intellectual elite, women, and the public in general. These responses reflect a certain development in the attitude of the adherents of this movement, including the attitudes toward the new government. We take note of them and we want to believe that they are not the product of a mere tactical maneuver or an attitude designed to derive profit from the advantages any democracy offers, to its adversaries as well as to others.

[Question] You have just mentioned Mr Ghannouchi, the head of the MTI, but hasn't he just made a tour to hold political meetings in the provinces which led you to issue a warning to him?

[Answer] That is true. We told him that until his movement has obtained legal recognition, he must not engage in activities of this nature.

I repeat that those fundamentalists who provide proof that they adhere to the provisions of the law and the norms and rules which will be made explicit, in the national pact in particular, are entitled to recognition as a party. The strictures of the law, as is the case in any democracy, cannot be used against others except in a legitimate way.

Generally speaking, we want to contribute to changing the image and the vision the West has of Islam, with a view to improving it and making it more just, leading to great enhancement of fertile dialogue among various cultures and civilizations.

The Gains of Independence

[Question] Finally, do you think that the fundamentalists have abandoned their goal of seizing power?

[Answer] I am not naive. I am well aware that what any opposition party seeks is to win power. Just as I know perfectly well that one of the best ways of achieving this is to infiltrate constitutional organizations.

[Question] Are you thinking of altering the status of women?

[Answer] Not in the least. This is a great gain achieved by independence, and it is irreversible.

[Question] What do you think of the claim made by the fundamentalists about the "failure" of the Western and secular model of development urged by President Bourguiba?

[Answer] With the advantage of distance in time, I would say that the members of the elite who were installed in power when independence was won and who surrounded Bourguiba tried in fact to propagate an ideal inspired by Western and secular values. But what made this maneuver suspect in the eyes of a part of society was the fact that this elite seemed to be ashamed of the Islamic nature of our people. This same elite, moreover, pushed the particularism of what they were trying to do a bit too far, to the detriment of the geopolitical environment of the country and its cultural and historical personality. I am among those who believe that our rich history of struggle for emancipation, our organizational traditions, our political culture and our reformist movement could have made a richer contribution to the common Arab patrimony if this elite had been less committed to particularism.

But to speak of failure is excessive. On the whole, the people of Tunisia are proud of what was achieved under President Bourguiba's sponsorship.

[Question] Will the trial of the some 150 fundamentalists, the officers, policemen and customs officials who were arrested last November while they were plotting terrorist actions, take place?

[Answer] Yes, of course. Just after 7 November, the minister of interior made it clear that the individuals involved in this affair will be tried for the crimes with which they are charged, and not because of their membership in this or that political movement. The head of the fundamentalists, for his part, recently stated clearly that his movement has not admitted involvement, as such, in this undertaking, saying that the case was a matter for the courts.

[Question] How is it possible to continue to speak of socialist options when you are increasingly involved in liberalization measures and transfers to the private sector?

[Answer] It is true that we are involved in a process of reorganizing the economic gears, and this is manifested by transfers to the private sector and the liberalization of nonstrategic branches. Economic efficiency requires the improvement of profitability, increases in production, the rationalization of management and debureaucratization. These are the best guarantees for achieving a nondogmatic kind of socialism.

In fact, Tunisia has long since reached an important stage in its development. We have exhausted all, or almost all, of the resources of our domestic market, and we can no longer count on income from oil in the future. We must, then, seek ways of improving quality and increasing productivity. This means that the role of the state must be redefined, its tools for action must be replaced, and its relations with the social partners must be reconsidered. In this connection, I should say that the massive intervention of the state, necessary and beneficial although it has been, has nonetheless had harmful effects, has created distortions, has led to a form of collective irresponsibility and a welfare mentality, and has multiplied statement income.

[Question] Are you planning to create a commission to investigate cases of illicit enrichment, as the Tunisian press has reported?

[Answer] Yes, that is true. But we will not undertake this kind of operation in any sensational way. We will proceed instead on the basis of fiscal corrections.

[Question] Are you, like Mr Gorbachev, encountering many cases in which officials in your party are blocking or hindering the measures adopted? After all, many people in the RCD must feel that their privileges are being threatened.

[Answer] This has in fact occurred, but since the party congress last July, these fears have been to a great extent assuaged. Many new members, scientists and university people in particular, joined at that time. There has been a certain renewal.

[Question] How do you plan to deal with the difficult economic and financial situation Tunisia is experiencing, particularly pursuant to the drought?

[Answer] This is henceforth my main concern, and I will devote my time to it very seriously as soon as I return from my visit to France. Now that we have made improvements in the political and social climate, economic questions must have priority. We will of course rely on ourselves, but also on friendly countries such as France. For Tunisia is faced this year with a drought more serious than any previously experienced. This is reflected in particular in a substantial decline in farm production. And it has been aggravated by the locust plague.

[Question] What prospects, from this point of view, does the Greater Maghreb project offer you?

[Answer] The Greater Maghreb project cannot be considered in situational terms. It is a project for the future and an ideal framework for cooperation. Moreover, we have consistently been consulting with the countries of the Maghreb with a view to better coordination of our actions. The best example is our effort to deal with the locust invasion.

In this connection, we have for several months been involved in the process of establishing structures for the Maghreb. The High Commission which was established following the Zeralda summit meeting is working on the definition of the concrete methods for setting up inter-Maghreb structures for negotiating and reaching agreement. Concrete and specific proposals are already under study pertaining to the establishment of a standardized or common identity card, freedom of circulation for individuals and goods, and free trade zones.

To the extent, in fact, that we have truly embarked upon the path leading toward the establishment of a veritable Maghreb community. I am sure that it will not take us long to complete this project.

[Question] Don't you fear that the democratization project you have undertaken will worry some of your neighbors?

[Answer] We are not unaware that our experiment is being watched, but I have no fears of this sort. On the contrary, I have every reason to be satisfied with our present relations with our neighbors, which have become calmer and more confident. In any case, we have no intention of making of our experience a model for export to our neighbors or anywhere else.

[Question] The normalization of your relations with Libya has led to positive results in the financial sector. What is the situation on the political level? What do you think of the idea of a Maghreb without frontiers?

[Answer] The normalization of our relations with Libya is not the product of any mercantile ambition. It is, rather, a part of an effort which we would like to be noble, generous and enduring. It is in this spirit that the reconciliation between two neighboring countries, fated to cooperate and to mobilize their human and natural resources for the well-being of their peoples, has come about.

It was we ourselves who urged a Maghreb without frontiers. We see this on the horizon—a mobilization project which will develop real popular support.

And then, there are all sorts of frontiers. There are those which are visible and there are others which are not, ranging from those created by entry visas and customs duties to those characterized by police stations and boundary markers. Our technicians will study ways of eliminating these frontiers gradually, in order to establish free trade zones, customs unions, etc. In the end, we will achieve this Maghreb without frontiers, which cannot help but be a factor working for peace and stability in this region of the world and making it a partner of choice for Europe.

'Qadhdhafi Understood Me'

[Question] But just a short time ago, Tunisian opposition elements were being trained in Libyan camps. What has become of them?

[Answer] I explained to Colonel Qadhdhafi that this had to stop, and he fully understood me. In any case, the Libyans supplied us with a list of several hundred Tunisians who were involved, and we will see that they have passports so that they can return to the country. There will be no problem.

[Question] Was the postponement of your visit to the United States related in some way to the concern expressed by Washington following your rapprochement with Tripoli?

[Answer] There was absolutely no connection. Moreover, I made it very clear to Colonel Qadhdhafi that Tunisia remains faithful to its international commitments. He accepted this entirely, moreover, and I must in truth add that he had nothing further to say in that connection.

The truth is that we had asked for a postponement of my visit to the United States for several days, solely for scheduling reasons. However, President Reagan's commitments made this impossible, and so we had to postpone the visit.

[Question] Can we not discern a desire to rebalance your relations with certain African and Arab countries, and might such a development not have repercussions on the relations between Tunis and the West?

[Answer] Yes, we are reviewing our policy with regard to our region, in the broadest sense, as well as throughout the world. Not to reject any friendship whatsoever, but rather, on the contrary, to make of Tunisia a credible and serious partner in the building of a world of peace and progress, and to take the development which has occurred into account.

[Question] For a year now, a certain cooling has been noted in the relations between France and Tunisia. Were you disappointed by the attitude of the French government when you took office? What are the major bilateral issues which concern you?

[Answer] If there is a cooling, it has certainly not been noted on the Tunisian side. On the contrary, there was a period of observation, and perhaps surprise, in Paris at the time of the 7 November change. I find this entirely normal, and I felt no disappointment with this attitude of caution and reserve, which was entirely legitimate. But Tunisia and France have remained friendly countries, and both official and informal visits and trade have continued at the same rate. Official Tunisia has matched the developmental mood of its people, and mutual esteem has done nothing but develop and grow stronger between us and our French friends.

You can see that my first official visit outside the Arab-African zone will be to France. It is good that it should be thus.

There is no single one of the issues in our bilateral relations which is my main concern. They all arouse and hold my interest. I have given instructions for the final closing of the last files pertaining to the colonial era, so as to be able to undertake a calm and fruitful dialogue with President Mitterrand, the French government and the French people which will give an entirely new impetus to our cooperation and which will fall within the framework of an ambitious vision of the relations between the Maghreb and Europe. That having been said, it is obvious that France could do more for Tunisia in terms of helping us to create jobs, so true it is that employment remains one of our most serious problems, as well as in developing our agriculture and our small and average enterprises.

[Question] Do you plan to give priority to Tunisia's relations with Italy, which is often described in Tunis as a more understanding partner than France?

[Answer] There are old traditions of friendship, as well as a certain familiarity, between Tunisia and Italy. From the Tunisian coastal areas in the region of Kelibia to Cap Bon, one can see the lights of Sicily with the naked eye, in good weather. French is the main language of our elite,

but the technical vocabulary of our fishermen is Italian. And the people of Tunisia have shown great ingenuity in tuning in all the Italian television channels.

No one can find here any desire whatsoever to fan any Franco-Italian rivalry. In any case, we want to cultivate and intensify cooperative relations and trade with all of the friends geography and history have given us.

Moreover, cooperative relations are not dictated, where we are concerned, by any prejudice, much less by privileges previously acquired. Our relations with this partner or that are dictated exclusively by the response we get from them and the degree of interest and understanding each shows in our proposals and our priorities.

Portrait of a Technician

A broad-shouldered man with abundant black hair who carries only a little extra weight, President Ben Ali does not look his 52 years. Born in Hammam-Sousse on 3 September 1936 to a family of very modest means, he plunged into action even before he had completed his secondary studies at the high school in his home town. An official biography says that "At the age of 16, he was active in the ranks of the Destourian Youth, and he served as a liaison agent between the regional structures of the party and the armed struggle which was then being waged by the members of the resistance. His activities earned him imprisonment and rejection by all of the establishments in Tunisia in 1952."

These ups and downs did not prevent him from obtaining his degree as an electrical engineer prior to being accepted for military training at Saint-Cyr, at the artillery school in Chalons-sur-Marne, and then in the United States. (Two of his fellow students at Saint-Cyr, Minister of Interior Habib Hammar and Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdelhamid Escheikh, are members of his cabinet. None other than President Ben Ali himself is minister of defense.) "The party, seeing his intelligence and industriousness, decided to send him to France," the biography continues, "in the first group of those who were to form the nucleus of the future national army." For several years he served as the director of military security before being appointed to head the national detective force in December of 1977. He was in disfavor for a time following the uprisings in Qafsa in 1980, which, his rivals charged, he was unable to foresee. This earned him a stay in Warsaw as ambassador.

His past services were remembered, however, when the time came to extract the lessons to be learned from the "bread rebellions" which shook the regime in January 1984. He then became secretary of state for national security, then minister of national security in October 1985, and in April 1986, minister of interior.

"I am only a technician," he told Mr Mzali, who was then prime minister. When the latter fell into disgrace, he began to play an increasingly important role in

Rachid Sfar's cabinet. He was elected to the political bureau of the Destourian Socialist Party, and was made a minister of state in May 1987. Only 6 weeks elapsed between his appointment to the post of prime minister and the removal of Mr Bourguiba on 7 November 1987.

A methodical worker who has little capacity for eloquence, but is a dedicated data-processing enthusiast, President Ben Ali lacks the flamboyant style the Supreme Combatant had in his prime. But the flashing humorous glances, a certain joviality and a definitely convivial attitude when he is with his intimates show that he has moved smoothly, without internal problems, into the successor's role. To become convinced of this, one has only to watch him working with ease, simplicity and satisfaction in the presidential palace in Carthage, from which he will henceforth oversee the fate of Tunisia, and where this former officer likes to reiterate that "The place of the Army is in the barracks."

5157

Government Frees Funds for Housing Loans
45190086a Tunis LE TEMPS in French 27 Jul 88 p 4

[Text] While Tunisia may not be suffering a real housing crisis like the one experienced by other nations such as Egypt, it is nevertheless facing certain difficulties which confront those seeking housing as well as real estate promoters.

In order to satisfy both groups, a new housing strategy was recently adopted. In its different programs, the strategy takes the limited means of the citizen as well as promoters' interests into account. It should be noted that the need to promote the sector turned out to be so vital that certain measures were taken before the adoption of the new strategy, announced on 30 June, to be precise.

The release of anticipated credits and an extension of the loan repayment period for savers belonging to the CNEL (National Housing Saving Fund) and wishing to find housing are the two main measures that preceded adoption of the new housing strategy. It should be recalled that the loans are credits that can be extended to any saver who has saved regularly for 2 years. The second important measure consists of extending to 20 years the repayment period for FOPROLOS (Housing Promotion Fund for Wage Earners) credits, a period initially set at 15 years, provided the saver can provide 20 percent of the financing himself.

The decision is obviously beneficial to savers, who will no longer have to wait 4 long years to get a loan, as well as to real estate promoters. The latter had in fact been in a difficult situation because of the wage freeze in effect since 1983 and the high cost of construction costs, which in turn resulted in an imbalance in the supply and demand. Actually, despite the so-called "housing crisis" of which most savers complain, there is housing that remains unsold. Several buildings stand available but

unoccupied in various districts of the capital. The main cause of the unsold housing is the high cost of what is mostly economical housing (aimed at middle-income savers). Moreover, even those included in this category are seeking suburban housing (planned for low incomes) since it is quite low in cost and more modern.

A third and equally important measure, inasmuch as it will encourage real estate promoters to launch low-cost (social) and luxury suburban housing construction projects, was also announced along with those already described. In this way, promoters may enjoy prefinancing of their projects, whatever the cost of the housing.

This series of decisions was followed by the adoption of a new strategy to stimulate the housing sector. This social-type strategy includes several programs of action aimed at helping the middle-income wage earner so that he may achieve his main goal in life: acquiring housing, and at the same time encourage promoters to derive a profit while meeting the needs of the low- and middle-income groups.

It was within this context that the announcement came of immediate loans to be granted to persons not belonging to the CNEL. An agreement governing the granting of such loans was signed between the minister of finance and the CNEL. These immediate loans have a 15,000-dinar ceiling and are cumulative with credits granted within the framework of the housing saving system. However, the combined total is not to exceed 70 percent of the cost of the housing for which the loan is used. The repayment period for such credits is stretched over a period of 10 or 15 years. This new provision will be put into effect as soon as the interest rate is set. The average is likely to be an estimated 11 percent.

The measure, which should solve the housing crisis at least partly, is actually one of the seven goals set by the new housing strategy.

It should be recalled that among its main objectives is the conversion of the CNEL into a housing development bank, whose prerogatives would be those of a development rather than deposit bank, and encouragement to the construction of low-income housing, while carrying out a project to develop 17,000 lots throughout the country and entrusting to the CNEL responsibility for financing an immediate program of 4,000 social housing units.

11464

Development of Exports for EEC Market
45190086b Tunis LE TEMPS in French 27 Jul 88 p 4

[Text] For Tunisia, as for the other countries of the Maghreb, the European Economic Community has long been an important or even essential export market. Its preponderant but fragile place has always roused concern among Tunisian producers and exporters, concern

corroborated by two facts: the expansion of the EEC and the advent of a unified market in 1992. The issue was brought to the forefront once again with the visit to Tunisia by the president of the EEC, Jacques Delors.

However, above and beyond these developments, it is still essential that Tunisia make certain that its agricultural and manufacturing exports are protected from political and economic contingencies that might occur in Europe and the Mediterranean.

Exports play a prime role for Tunisia. This is so because of several fundamental characteristics of the Tunisian economy:

Tunisia's economy is strongly internationalized and its degree of openness is some 33 percent greater than that of the Federal Republic of Germany, France or Italy, countries heavily engaged in international trade.

Such internationalization goes hand in hand with a trade balance showing a structural deficit from 1980 to 1986, when the annual deficit varied between 523 million and 1.04 billion dinars and the rate of cover of imports by exports varied between 57 and 63 percent.

Despite resources from tourism (390 million dinars in 1986), the chronic trade deficit has resulted in a foreign debt that amounted to \$5.7 billion by the end of 1985. That debt represents 2 years worth of exports of goods and services (Morocco: 4 years; Algeria, 1.5 years) and service on the debt absorbs a third of those exports of goods and services.

Consequently, whatever the prospects of a possible renegotiation of Tunisia's debt, there is one fact that Tunisia cannot avoid: It must relentlessly promote its exports, which now revolve around four major areas: oil; phosphates and their derivatives; the manufacturing industry; and the agro-food industry. Of the total exports amounting to 1,404,000,000 dinars in 1986 (3.5 times the 1977 exports), exports of manufactured products represented 44.6 percent, oil 24.2 percent, phosphates and derivatives 19.2 percent and the agro-food industry 12.6 percent. The fundamental trends of recent years can be summed up as follows:

1) a leveling off and beginning decline of oil exports as a result of the double effect of a leveling off of known resources and an increase in domestic consumption. In medium-range terms, it is assumed that Tunisia will start to import oil products unless there are significant discoveries of new deposits.

2) tangible growth in exports of manufactured products, essentially revolving around textiles and leather (ready-to-wear, knitted goods and, secondarily, shoes), representing over two-thirds of such exports of manufactured products;

3) uneven growth of food exports: The upward trend of such exports in current money ill conceals the irregular trend of the relative share of such food exports among total exports: From 14 or 15 percent in 1977-1978, they dropped (some 7, 8 or 9 percent) from 1980 to 1983, then went back up to 12 percent in 1986.

4) an upward trend on the part of phosphates and derivatives: from 11-12 percent in the early 1980's to 16-17 percent from 1984 to 1986. The growth increasingly stems from processed exports, with the share of superphosphates and phosphoric acid rising at the expense of natural phosphates. Tunisia is now the third-ranking exporter in the world of fertilizer after the United States and Morocco.

One must ask what direction such exports will take in the years ahead. The question is all the more important because the Mediterranean Basin has experienced a political and economic event of the first magnitude: the entry of the Iberian countries into the EEC. The consequences of the expansion of the EEC will be felt in the years to come as the legal process of new memberships develops, but also and above all, as a result of the reorganization of the Spanish and Portuguese production apparatuses.

The entry of these two countries into the EEC, developing Mediterranean-type agricultural specializations and experiencing wage levels under North European norms, was immediately felt by countries in the southern Mediterranean, and particularly Morocco and Tunisia, as a grave threat to their exports. There can be no doubt that any prospect of Tunisian exports must take that major event into account, especially since the EEC's share of Tunisian exports was 62 percent over the entire 1981-1986 period. Quite rightly, Tunisian fears concentrated on two export poles: the agro-food and manufacturing industries.

Agricultural Exports and EEC Expansion

In many third-world countries, the concepts of food crops and export crops are pitted one against the other. This is not pertinent when one analyzes Tunisia's situation. Actually, export crops are not inherently for export, but become so only because of their destination. Consequently, the only distinction to be made is between agriculture with surpluses, on purpose or by accident, and agriculture with inevitable shortages, at least in the foreseeable future, agriculture with shortages (grain, sugar, meat and milk) whose future is far from being indifferent to the evolution of the Tunisian trade deficit and the resulting foreign debt.

The Tunisian consumer is thus caught between foreign exports and domestic exports (tourism and the hotel zones), with both responding to the same logic of the search for foreign currency.

These are therefore two major categories of Tunisian food exports that have nothing to fear from expansion of the EEC. However, there are sensitive products in the food balance in growing order of importance.

Vineyards and wine are an inheritance from colonial times, a difficult inheritance, and Spain's entry into the EEC will not facilitate the handling of that legacy from the colonial past. Beyond the domestic demand of the foreign community, some Tunisians and domestic exports for tourists, the markets are not immediately obvious. A real problem therefore exists whose impact on the trade balance is marginal, but whose localized repercussions on wine regions in the northeast must be viewed closely.

Oranges are a more important, but not necessarily more worrisome, category. There is certainly reason to fear a sharp rise in the potential of Spanish citrus production and consequently, increasing difficulties exporting to the EEC. The fear of increasing exports and especially Spanish competitiveness in terms of the cost of the product to the consumer will be formidable if Spain manages to control its wage costs (assuming that Tunisia will control its own also) and if technological developments allow an increase in the capitalistic intensity of the production process. However, it is important not to confuse the threat to exports with the threat to production.

Between 1982 and 1987, Tunisia exported 1.86 tons of oranges, or 25.6 percent of the 7,264,000 tons produced during the seasons from 1981-1982 to 1986-1987. Three-quarters of all production was therefore absorbed by the domestic market. However, that market is not frozen. Within a dozen or so years, if the per capital consumption of oranges remains unchanged, Tunisia will need a quarter of its current exported production to meet domestic needs. If production does not increase, Tunisia will have a problem meeting its foreign demand! The future is therefore far from gloomy for Tunisian production of citrus fruit and Cap Bon is not about to start burning its orange groves tomorrow!

Finally, olive oil is another specific case. The portion exported is far from marginal and yet, as in the case of oranges, fears concern exports much more—and consequently, the macroeconomic impact on the foreign balance—than production itself and therefore, the economy of the producer regions. During the period from 1974 to 1984, olive oil production was 743,000 tons. Exports represented 434,000 tons, or 58 percent of that production. If per capita consumption remained unchanged, some 40 years would have to go by at the current population growth rate in order for domestic consumption to absorb that "surplus" olive oil entirely. The problem might therefore look very serious. Fortunately for Tunisia, it is not posed in those terms. Actually, along with these olive oil exports, Tunisia imports large quantities of other vegetable oils. During the 1978-1983 period, such vegetable oil imports amounted to 514,000

tons, compared with 434,000 tons of olive oil exported. The Tunisian strategy on oleaginous products therefore consists of exporting olive oil and importing less expensive oils.

Manufacturing Exports

On 27 April 1972, Tunisia passed a law concerning the establishment of a special regime for industries producing for export. That law, 72-38, was replaced by Law 85-14 of 11 October 1985, which does not modify the overall architecture of the system encouraging export industries, but introduces even more favorable provisions.

A recent study shows that since 1981, export industries covered by Law 72-38 have not substantially increased in number: 350 in 1986 compared with 300 in 1981.

In contrast, despite the low increase in the number of export enterprises, since 1980, exports of clothing and knitted goods have more than doubled, going from 130 to 323 million dinars. Despite the depreciation in the dinar, this is solid growth, especially when one notices that in 1986, ready-to-wear became the leading category of Tunisian exports, for the first time surpassing the crude oil category and easily outranking phosphates.

The Iberian countries' entry into the EEC revived Tunisian fears on the subject. And yet, Spain's entry into the EEC was underlined as a positive factor for textiles in the Southern Mediterranean. Indeed, the opening of a market of nearly 40 million inhabitants, previously highly protected, to textile imports authorized by the EEC could not be a negative factor. Nevertheless, it is the competition aspect of the Iberian Peninsula, particularly Portugal, that was singled out by Tunisia. Since the 1977-1988 crisis, the EEC has indeed been the bugaboo for Tunisian ready-to-wear. Import quotas set at the time by the EEC broke the budding growth of the Tunisian ready-to-wear industry. "By practically freezing imports at the 1977-1978 level, the EEC treated Tunisia or Morocco, which were just beginning and which had but a very modest foothold in the European textile market, on an equal footing with Hong Kong, for example, then the leading exporter of garments." It is true that these export industries still demonstrate a certain fragility. They are not industrial cathedrals ready to withstand the weather and shelter several generations of workers. Moreover, do such industries still exist? The weak capitalistic nature of these industries, the rapid recovery of invested capital and the accelerated turnover of raw material stocks enable foreign manufacturers to anticipate almost immediate abandonment of one production country for another if economic and political conditions change.

Mid-Year Statistics Raise Questions About Pricing Policy

45190086d Tunis LE MAGHREB in French
15 Jul 88 p 28

[Article by Houcine Ben Achour. Word in italics as published]

[Text] The impression has prevailed in economic circles for some time that a race against the clock is underway to halt the rate at which prices are rising and bring the inflation rate down to reasonable proportions. Otherwise, how is one to explain the fact that the results of the price index, which are not normally officially delivered until the end of each month for the preceding month, were released in mid July for the specific family consumer price index for June 1988? Somewhat of a scoop even if the details are not yet known!

Actually, a .2 percent hike in the specific index marks a net slowing of the rise. Sliding since early in the year, the rate of increase is now 1.9 percent. For the first 6 months, this is a remarkable result. If the trend continues over the months ahead, it will augur a frankly exceptional mastery of prices. Nevertheless, one may be permitted to observe several shadows over this positive picture.

Unable to use the specific results for the first 6 months of the year—they were not available—one has but to analyze the results of the 5 months of 1988 in order to make certain observations. We know that the specific family consumer price index reached the level of 138.9, an increase of .7 percent over the month of April. This increase is substantially higher than price variations observed in May of previous years.

We also know that price variations in May 1988 were affected by three factors: the drought, the month of Ramadan and the *aid*, plus the additional demand engendered by Libyan visitors (elimination of the last two factors can to a great extent explain the slowing of the increase for the month of June, plus the vertiginous drop in the price of eggs and poultry).

Often forgotten is the fact that the increase over 12 months, meaning from May 1987 to May 1988, was 6.5 percent and that the food group in the specific index recorded an increase of 8.5 percent, higher than the index itself. Consequently, the drought is not the only cause of the price hike.

There is, in fact, another equally important cause having to do with the pricing policy.

Actually, an analysis of the shift in the index based on pricing policies shows that the increase is 58.8 percent due to the system of complete freedom. This clearly means that the expected discipline of economic operators acting within a context of total freedom from price setting did not achieve the anticipated results, at least for the month of May.

Consequently, must one take the step in the direction of questioning such a system? It would seem that an immediate answer to such a question cannot be given, at the risk of upsetting several parameters.

Initial conclusions must not be drawn until the end of the year, for they will affect the very foundation of our economic strategy, based, among other things, on a total liberalization of market prices.

Whatever the case, while the June results are very promising on the overall level, they should provide an opportunity for an initial analysis of the health of the country's economy halfway through the fiscal year.

Shift in Specific Price Index Based on Pricing Policies, May 1988

Policy	In %	Dec 87	May 88	Shift	Cont.	Cont.%
Taxation	33.3	125.9	127.3	1.09	.33	20.21
GC Fund	13.9	124.0	125.1	.94	.12	7.14
Pub. Rates	8.0	124.1	124.1	.00	.00	.00
Other Pub. Rates	11.4	129.6	132.2	1.99	.21	13.02
Total Freedom	52.0	141.2	143.7	1.78	.96	58.81
Other Policies	14.7	144.7	147.9	2.22	.35	20.98
Self-Equal.	10.3	145.4	148.7	2.31	.25	15.32
Total Free.	3.2	135.8	139.0	2.34	.07	4.53
Equalization	1.2	162.5	164.5	1.26	.02	1.13
Overall	100.0	136.6	138.9	1.65	1.65	100.0

Source: INS [National Institute of Statistics]

Test Scores Show Greater Margin Between Urban, Rural Communities

45190086c Tunis LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE in French
6 Jul 88 p 9

[Article by Brahim Oueslati and M.L. Bakini]

[Text] An initial analysis of the results of entrance examinations for the first year of high school reveals that the gap separating rural and urban schools is widening every year. Nor is it any accident that schools failing to score at all—a total of five, based on our information—are in governorates where the percentage of rural population is very high. The five are Kairouan, Zaghouan, Siliana, Jendouba and Le Kef. Essentially agricultural, these regions all share the same trait: a poor, scattered rural population (some 80 percent of the total population). This results in a number of difficulties, mainly the

lack of a basic infrastructure needed for their development, including practicable rural roads and trails, means of transportation, well-equipped schools, and so on.

Likewise, the illiteracy rate in these regions is relatively high.

In contrast, one can observe that the best scores were achieved by governorates where the number of urban schools is quite high. These are also regions mainly oriented toward tourism or industry (Sfax, Sousse, Tunis, Nabeul, and so on).

In order to give a more general idea, we are presenting the following table with precise data for six governorates in the country. Three governorates: Sfax (1), Sousse (2) and Nabeul (6), achieved high scores. The other three: Mahdia (19), Le Kef (20) and Kairouan (23) registered percentages far below the national average.

Test Scores

Governorate	Total Primary Schools	Urban Schools	Rural Schools	Total Teachers	Assistants
01 Sfax	292	242 (83%)	50 (17%)	3726	2086 (56%)
02 Sousse	140	79 (58%)	59 (42%)	2204	1067 (48%)
06 Nabeul	230	125 (55%)	104 (45%)	3037	1148 (38%)
19 Mahdia	161	34 (21%)	127 (30 semi-rural, 79%)	2205	725 (33%)
20 Le Kef	157	47 (30%)	110 (70%)	1558	324 (21%)
23 Kairouan	230	41 (18%)	189 (82%)	2557	533 (21%)

The table shows that the number of urban schools in the first three governorates is quite high (447) compared with only 215 rural schools, or a rate of 68 percent.

In contrast, in the last three governorates, the number of rural schools is very high: 426 out of a total of 548, or 78 percent.

Urban schools are clearly endowed with an adequate infrastructure and equipment. Teachers have all the pedagogical materials necessary. Classes are not crowded (an average of 30 in a class in Sfax).

In addition, the parents are quite well-off and have a rather high cultural level, which enables them to follow their children closely.

Goal: Overcome Inadequacies

All the teachers and administrative personnel we contacted are unanimous in stating that schools in the interior and especially rural schools suffer from various ills, whence the quite low achievement scores and even 0 marks.

It would appear that one can state, without risk of being in error, that the time has come to bring these schools up to date and try to overcome certain insufficiencies.

For example, many students must travel several kilometers a day to get to school, which becomes a real obstacle and has a negative impact on academic results.

Trails to rural schools are often impassable in the wintertime, resulting in troublesome delays.

Teachers and pupils are forced to face sudden showers and inclement weather in order to get to a school that is usually located in a relatively inaccessible area, which scarcely facilitates administrative visits and inspections.

There is a flagrant lack of any infrastructure or equipment, school premises are inadequate and there is no drinking water or, above all, electricity, which obviously creates visual problems for many pupils forced to follow the same schedule (0730-1730 hours) as those in urban schools. (One can scarcely see the blackboard by 1700 hours in the wintertime without lights.)

Finally and above all, one confronts an attitude of resignation on the part of parents in rural areas that borders on unconsciousness, combined with the cultural vacuum in which the pupil lives.

Although ambitious and difficult, solutions are urgent:

It is necessary to think about increasing the number of inspection visits to high school graduates, who are hired without the slightest experience, sent to schools set up in rural areas and often forced to work without any teaching materials.

A suitable schedule must be set up for rural schools having no electricity.

Parents must be made aware so that they will be more concerned about their children and exercise daily supervision. The satisfactory results obtained by urban schools are partly the work of parents who, without being guilty of gratuitous authoritarianism or applying the old-fashioned iron-fisted pedagogy, have used different

means to improve their children's academic results. In the remote corners of our rural areas, the role of social welfare workers is of the utmost importance.

Integrated boarding schools must be set up to solve the problem of pedagogical performance. The ministry in question, local authorities and inhabitants of the regions can combine their efforts to achieve this goal.

Decent housing must be provided for teachers (most of these "pioneers" live in rudimentary housing).

Finally, the problem of absenteeism must be remedied by giving attention to maintaining the often impassable roads.

11464

AFGHANISTAN

Soviet Aid Distributed to Needy Families

46650010a Kabul HAQIQAT-E ENQELAB-E SAWR in
Dari 5 Jun 88 p 3

[Text] Material assistance from the friendly country of the Soviet Union with a value of over 9 million rubles was distributed by the Peace Caravan of the USSR among the needy Afghan families.

These relief aid materials which consisted of foodstuffs and clothing were distributed throughout various locations in the country among needy families. Similarly, more than 400,000 individuals who were in need of medical attention were also examined by the medical personnel of the Soviet health organs and received free medicine.

12719/12232

Arms Purchased From Opposition Forces

46650010c Kabul HAQIQAT-E ENQELAB-E SAWR in
Dari 15 Jun 88 p 2

[Text] According to the decree of October 1987 of the revolutionary council presidium with regard to the purchase of arms from the armed opposition groups, recently two units of surface-to-air missiles of (Strila) type were purchased from the aforementioned groups.

The abovestated missiles which had been brought into Afghanistan by the leaders of some opposition forces in order to attack passenger planes, were recently purchased after contacts were made between the opposition groups and the state security officials based on a predetermined price.

The price of the aforesaid missiles were paid according to the decree to the opposition groups.

12719/12232

Importance of Agriculture to National Economy Discussed

46650010b Kabul HAQIQAT-E ENQELAB-E SAWR in
Dari 6 Jun 88 p 2

[Text] The agricultural sector in our country, as far as the manpower is concerned, comprises the richest economic arena as compared to any other sector; therefore, particular attention to this major production sector does not only confine itself to the economic issues but it will also encompass other political and social dimensions as well. About 85 percent of the population of the country are engaged in this industry and earn their living from it.

In the total national economic composition, the agricultural products comprise over 50 percent of the domestic gross product and more than 50 percent of the export revenue of the country. In a like manner, the agricultural

sector enjoys significant importance in securing the raw materials for the growth of our developing industries and those farmers and individuals who work in other national economic sectors.

The PDPA and the DRA have always put all their possibilities and will always do so, at the disposal of the people for the purpose of advancement of the national economy and agriculture. Our government has paid particular attention to this matter during the revolution years. For instance, it exempted all the farmers and land owners from tax penalties for the years 1357 to 1359 [21 March 1978 - 20 March 1979 to 21 March 1980 - 10 March 1981] which exceeded an amount of over 722 million afghanis. Likewise, it reduced the price of chemical fertilizer and other farm equipment by 20 percent and increased the purchase price of cotton and sugar-beet from the farmers by 80 percent and 70 percent respectively.

On the average, on an annual basis, the government has distributed 150,000 tons of chemical fertilizer, and 16,000 tons of wheat, pesticides and herbicides among the farmers. In a similar fashion, during the years after the advent of the revolution the government has put 190 tractors, 82 combines and about 150,937 hectares of agricultural land at the disposal of our farmers. After the advent of the revolution seven mechanized agricultural stations and five tractor repair units were set up in 12 provinces throughout the country. Furthermore, the government has undertaken substantial subsidies in light of rental agricultural equipment. At the same time, other services aimed at enhancing the professional knowhow of the farmers and providing them with new agrotechnology such as: chemical fertilizers, improved seeds, proper irrigation procedures, spraying of herbicides and pesticides have also been supplied by the government.

In the same fashion, for the purpose of enhancing the reproduction and breeding of animals, tests and diagnosis, million doses of vaccines have been made available to the animal farms through 24 artificial insemination stations.

Under the present circumstances when the realization of the national reconciliation and the enhancement of the living standard of the people are considered to be the top-most front issues, more emphasis is given to the agricultural and land policies in order to ensure the rallying of the farmers behind the humanitarian government and further solidify the social foundation of the revolution in the rural areas. Since its imperative to follow a policy which will provide sufficient means of subsistence and a comfortable housing program for our countrymen.

Comrade Najibullah, general secretary of the PDPA Central Committee and president of the DRA in the report of June plenum of last year stated: the artificial distribution of up to 30 acres of land which might have been beneficial in a normal economy could not bring

about the desired result for the farmers of our country; therefore, we decided to abandon this system of 5 to 30 acres to a more practical and beneficial system of distribution of up to 100 acres of land.

The allotment of more acreage of land with proper consideration of the prevailing conditions of our society can undoubtedly enhance the level of production of our farmers appreciably. It is quite clear that as a result of an increase in agricultural products, the foodstuff needs of the people will be met and a better atmosphere for the economic growth will become available. It is in an environment of peace and tranquility that we can truly ensure the enhancement of the living standard of our farmers from the standpoint of material need, agricultural equipment, seeds, chemical fertilizers, availability of credits and most importantly, provision and distribution of water.

It is quite obvious that only in an environment of complete peace and free of war we can enhance the various affairs of our farm industry based on a long-lasting socio-economic growth and development. Therefore, based on these fundamental factors, the PDPA and the DRA consider the national policy of reconciliation as the only way toward happiness, prosperity and national economic growth. It is for this purpose that the government has announced an honest and decisive end to the war, bloodshed and fratricide in Afghanistan so that our hard-working and peace-loving nation can be assured of a peaceful, prosperous and happy living environment.

12719/12232

National Economy Continues To Grow

46650008 Kabul HAQIAT-E ENQELAB-E SAWR in
Dari 14 Jun 88 p 2

[Text] With the beginning of the new year 1367 [21 March 1988 - 20 March 1989] the second year of the 5-year plan after the advent of the revolution is behind us. During last year, which is called by our people as the year of peace and national reconciliation, some remarkable transformations in our political, social and economic life took place and many great measures were put into action.

First of all these transformations appear to enhance the level of activity of the PDPA and the DRA in the international arena. During last year, the revolutionary government, through constructive means with regard to resolving the political situation of the Afghanistan, has been able to overcome all the shortcomings of the Geneva project in resolving the issues at hand. The proclamations of 9 February of comrade Najibullah, general secretary of the PDPA and president of the DRA and comrade M.S. Gorbachev, general secretary of the Central Committee of the USSR's communist party and other proclamations by the government of Afghanistan

and those of the Soviet Union regarding the resolution of the political situation in Afghanistan, have all practically paved the way for the signing of the relevant agreements.

Likewise, during last year other great steps concerning upgrading of the standard of living of our people, which has always enjoyed particular attention of an increase of 50 percent of workers' food-ration, distribution of two coupon-items which benefitted about 340,000 coupon-holders, an increase in the allowance of armed forces personnel, start of activity of military trade stores—whereby the essential needs of the armed forces' families are being presented at reduced prices, and payment of extra expenses to workers and government employees for regional and climatic considerations, all can be noted as some of the measures taken by the government in order to enhance our people's standard of living. In all, about 4 million of our countrymen were benefitted from these measures and enjoyed a higher living standard. This is one of the accomplishments of the revolutionary government under the prevailing circumstances of the national reconciliation policy.

Undoubtedly, it can be claimed that if the undeclared war of the imperialists against our country did not continue, many more individuals from among our countrymen would have enjoyed a higher standard of living.

An evaluation of 1366 [21 March 1987 - 20 March 1988] plan indicates that contrary to the continuation of the war and the devastating activities of the saboteurs which forces our government to direct exorbitant amounts of money and human power towards the defense of the country and peaceful life for the people, the gross national product during 1366 in comparison to a year ago, reached 3.7 billion afghanis or 2.4 percent increase in national revenue—which respectively shows an increase of 2.4 billion afghanis in GNP or 2.3 percent increase in revenues. In other national economic arenas, certain positive results were also reached. As a result of government assistance with regard to enhancing the level of farm products, the gross national farm product further increased by 0.7 percent in comparison to that of last year's. Furthermore, the purchase of 170,000 tons of wheat during 1366 was unprecedented in the country.

Production of coal, cement, sundried brick, electric power, lumber products, various light industries and food stuffs were also increased. Through implementation and realization of an investment plan from domestic resources for an amount of 33.3 billion afghanis, tens of large development projects such as the metal smelting of the Jangalak plant, blood bank project, Kabul's china manufacturing plant, Turghandi railway station, construction of Mazar-e Sharif granary, Kharvandi dormitory, repair of pedagogy institute, Kabul's air terminal, 72 schools, about 1500 apartments, 10 stores and construction of more than 100 kilometers of roadways

became possible. Likewise, in the arena of communications and transportation certain measures were implemented. The volume of passenger transfer by air increased by 6.4 percent and that of cargo by 8.5 percent for the same period.

In the meantime, with positive results in certain areas, there has been certain shortcomings in the work of some of the ministries, government departments and other institutions during 1366.

In addition to a decrease in the production of cotton products during last year, the quality of such products did not improve either. As a result of non-availability of raw cotton, the waiting period of jin and press plants has increased and non-use of their proper capabilities has resulted in a lower output and an increase in the price of final products.

Nonrealization of the Commerce Ministry's plan with regard to the processing of walnut, raisins, production of animal food, and non-implementation of the plan for sugar production, canned fruits and vegetables are some of the instances where certain deficiencies in the level of activity of some production sectors and weaknesses of other ministries and relevant departments are apparent in their lack of management control.

In a similar fashion, because of their inability to get needed raw materials, the production plans of private sector have suffered. Other deficiencies concerning provision of electric energy for the plants, training and involvement of skilled personnel comprise certain segment of these problems. It all bespeaks of the relevant ministries' lack of proper management towards the private sector.

Furthermore, the evaluation of the plan reveals the fact that there is a lack of initiative, a lack of attention to proper use of materials and reasonable use of available economic possibilities according to the relevant principles of the projected plans of the ministries, various other departments and appropriate institutions and collectives as well.

In a similar fashion, in the area of transportation although the plan indices are met, yet the transfer of cargo takes place at a very slow pace, the full capacity of the transport facilities are not being utilized and the waiting period and re-hauling of the trucks/freight carriers have not been decreased either. The Ministry of Electrical Energy continues on according to the plan indices; however, in order to provide sufficient electric power for the people it seems necessary to seek a way to reduce energy losses at the relevant plants and at the same time appropriate grounds for the transfer and conservation of fuel oil for the thermal electric stations and diesel generators be duly studied.

Thus, along with the accomplishments and successes there are certain deficiencies and shortcomings in the work of some of the ministries and other government departments which causes the delay and fallback of the plan indices. Here it should be pointed out that the same way as the realization of the plan in a certain area can help prompt and promote other areas, in a similar manner a lack of realization of the plan in other arenas can adversely affect certain areas of development, and in the end it will rob the government of the ability to further expedite the economic growth and development of the country and finally affect the betterment of living standard and diminish the defensive power of the country as a whole.

Therefore, it is up to the authorities of the ministries and government departments to call the responsible officials of their relevant organs to task and implement practical programs for a better economic and technical reorganization of their institutions with regard to making the utmost use of their available material, monetary and human-power resources. In this way, they should enhance the sense of responsibility of the officials in charge and through reasonable division of duties make them aware of their responsibilities towards the implementation of the of the plan indices.

It should be noted here that the realization of the plan indices for each and every department is an honorable duty and we all should make every effort to attain such honor.

12719/12232

IRAN

Pakistan To Sign Transportation Agreement *46400156b Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 6 Jul 88 p 2*

[Text] Economic Service—A transit agreement will soon be concluded between Iran and Pakistan. Also the association memorandum of a joint shipping company has been prepared and articulated.

Iran and Pakistan have had talks over the establishment of a refinery in Pakistan, as well as for a plan to export gas to east Asia through Pakistan.

This was revealed at the end of the trip of a Pakistani economic delegation that visited Iran last week headed by Aftab Ahmad Khan, a deputy of Pakistan's Economy Ministry.

In an interview, the deputy of Pakistan's Economy Ministry who left Tehran yesterday and was seen off by Dr Afjeh-i (the deputy of our country's Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance) called the results of this visit "positive" and said that the main purpose of his talks with economic officials in Tehran had been to

follow up the economic relations between the two countries within the framework of the memorandum of understanding signed by both sides at the third convention held between Iran and Pakistan.

He pointed out that an achieved result had been the preparation and finalization of a transit agreement between the two countries which would soon be concluded by the two sides. Also the association memorandum of a jointly held company in the shipping sector had been tendered which would be agreed upon by the two sides in the future.

Aftab Ahmad Khan also expressed hopes that the two countries will be able to achieve the \$400 million commodities' exchange as required by the memorandum of understanding. He added that both sides are aware of the fact that there is more room for purchasing goods by the two countries, and expressed hopes for a more significant increase in border exchanges, as a result of ongoing arrangements.

Dr Afjeh-i, who has been the main Iranian side of the talks carried out with the Pakistani delegation, described as "useful" the visits made for the development and expansion of economic relations between the two countries, and said that both sides had expressed their interest in joint investments to be made in Iran and Pakistan, and that agreements had been reached concerning re-exports between the two countries.

He said that the two sides have had talks about the establishment of a refinery in Pakistan, and a plan for exporting Iranian gas to east Asia through that country.

Dr Afjeh-i also said that the value of the exchanges made between the two countries during the first 6 months after the signing of the understanding memorandum of the third joint convention of Iran and Pakistan amounted to \$100 million which is less than what was agreed upon in the said memorandum. He said that while based on what was envisaged 100,000 tons of rice had to be bought from Pakistan, only half that quantity had been purchased. He expressed hope that during the next 6 months the amount of the rice purchase would reach the agreed level with the solution of existing constraints extant in this regard.

13458/12232

Ministry Announces Loans for Housing Unit Projects

46400156a Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 6 Jul 88 p 13

[Text] Economic Service: To provide dwellings for applicants, the Ministry of Housing will launch a plan for reducing site areas, increased production of building materials, the relocation of water resources, the development of satellite towns, the provision of leased homes, and the allocation of a credit of 130 million rials in housing loans to those without houses. According to

current plans a credit of 225 billion rials is envisaged for the site preparation of 400,000 housing units that will accommodate 2 million people.

According to an account given by KEYHAN's economic reporter, this was revealed during a press, radio and T.V. interview held yesterday morning by Eng. Kamrava, deputy to the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development. At the commencement of the interview he said: "There exist four essential requirements for housing development. These are land, capital, building materials, and management. As has been required by the new law, land should be made available to people in a readied condition, and we plan to build schools and department stores on the lands given to housing complexes. The next requirement, i.e. capital, will be provided by the granting of bank loans to applicants through the banking system. To this end and based on negotiations made with the Foreign Exchange Allocation Board, it has been decided to pay 130 million rials in bank credits for the development of housing units."

Eng Kamrava went on to say, "Our most critical problem is to provide building materials since most of these are imported items. According to estimates made, each square meter of ordinary housing construction has a \$20 foreign exchange dependency on building materials, and in case of using such service amenities as air-conditioning and the like, there will be a \$30 dependency on each square meter; if the building exceeds 4 stories its foreign currency dependency on the square meter will amount to \$50."

In continuing Eng Kamrava said, "This problem exists in large cities which will be solved with the development of satellite townships. The plan for developing these townships has been approved and the executory works for four townships have already commenced; in the case of two townships in the vicinity of Tehran—one south of Robat-Karim and the Saveh road, and one on the 25th kilometer of the Karaj-Qazvin road—the allocation of land has begun. Of course certain goals are pursued in developing these townships, such as the preservation of agricultural areas and protecting employment. The plan will cost 5 billion rials, and the means for launching it have already been made available."

The Housing Ministry's deputy said, "We have confronted no difficulties concerning the next requirement, i.e. management, since housing cooperatives, foundations, as well as the private sector have come to our aid in that connection."

The Plan for Providing Leased Units

He also added, "To implement the plan for providing leased housing units by the Ministry of Housing is one of the solutions proposed to the Council of Ministers. The cities of Bandar-Abbas, Bushehr and Qazvin have currently been singled out for carrying out this plan. Such housing units are to be built in small parcels, and their

rent will consume only 25 percent of the income of their occupants. The investment for establishing these units will be made without the use of state funds and with the use of people's money only and with banking accommodations."

He said, "Housing units developed under the supervision of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development will have a maximum site area of 100 meters for populous households, and a minimum site area of 40 meters for nuclear families."

Eng Kamrava went on to say, "Seventy-five percent of our nation's population live in housing units that are smaller than 100 square meters and 50 percent of them live in units below 50 sm. Among the Housing Ministry's policies for the provision of housing for the houseless is to provide guidance and incentives to people to build units with smaller site areas. For this reason and based on the proposed plan, people who choose smaller parcels for building their houses will pay less money. The price of land for the low-income indigent class will be nil; the price of land for the next class which is better off will be half of the real value; the middle class will have to pay the real value of land; and for those who choose to own larger parcels, a higher price than the real value of land will be charged, so that they will contribute to the housing of the lower-income groups. In fact, higher-income households will provide for building housing units for the lower-income groups."

He said, "In this regard we have also suggested to the banking system to consider certain financial facilitations in connection with due dates and investment interest rates for those who choose smaller sites for their housing units; also arrangements have been made with the Interior Ministry to exempt smaller housing units' applicants from the payment of building and renovation taxes, and contrarily, to require the applicants of larger housing units to pay progressive taxes. Also, the building materials for applicants of smaller housing units will be supplied to them according to their need and at government rates."

Currently Implemented Projects

The Housing Ministry deputy said, "We are presently involved in 253 site preparation projects covering a total area of 17458 hectares with a 225b rials' budget; to date rials 50 billion out of the said amount have been spent. Some 400,000 housing units will be established in these sites which will eventually accommodate 2 million people."

At the end of the interview Eng Kamrava said, "At the present time we have no land allotment difficulty in any city throughout the country and our chief setback is the provision of building materials. In every major city, Namely in Tehran, the Housing Ministry will as of the coming year be in a position to allot land to applicants.

The problem has been solved in Tehran by the development of 2 satellite townships. These townships will accommodate 200 to 500 thousand people.

13458/12232

First Iraqi Ship Ready To Pass Through Strait

46400175a London KEYHAN in Persian 18 Aug 88 p 1

[Text] After 8 years, the first Iraqi commercial ship, with 21 persons aboard, entered Fajireh Port in order to prepare for a passage through the Strait of Hormuz.

The Iraqi ship will anchor at Fajireh until 20 August. Once the official cease-fire between Iran and Iraq is declared, it will set out for the Strait of Hormuz.

In the past eight years, the Iranian navy has prevented the trafficking of commercial ships and oil tankers destined for Iraqi ports or which had set out from those ports in the Persian Gulf, and their routes were detected, it would seize them.

At the same time, it was announced that Lloyds, the international insurance company, has announced new insurance rates for ships departing for the Persian Gulf. The new rates are 50 percent lower than the previous ones. Lloyds has paid more than \$2 billion in compensation for ships damaged in the Persian Gulf over the past 8 years.

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Eight More Mojahed Reportedly Hanged

46400175b London KEYHAN in Persian 18 Aug 88 p 1

[Text] The Islamic Republic announced that it has executed eight more members of the People's Mojahedin, who were arrested while fighting the Iranian forces.

The Islamic Republic had hanged seven other Mojaheds in Kermanshah and Ilam a few days ago.

The execution of these eight Mojaheds took place in the cities of Eslamabad-e Gharb and Kangavar. Thus, the number of the Mojaheds executed since their joint attack with the Iraqi forces on the Iranian border has reached 15.

The officials of the Islamic Republic pointed out in a communique, published as a result of the attack of the Mojaheds on the western cities and their fighting against the Guards Corps and military forces, that one of the well-known and effective leaders of the Mojahedin was arrested in the course of the fighting last week and hanged in the central square of Eslamabad. This person had led the killing of many Guards Corps members and people of Eslamabad. The Islamic Republic did not reveal the name of this commander.

In the past weeks, supported by the Iraqi Air Force and artillery, the People's Mojahedin entered the cities of Mehran, Dehloran and Eslamabad-e Gharb. After a brief stay and suffering a number of casualties, they returned to Iraq.

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Bazargan Comes Out of Hiding

46400175d London KEYHAN in Persian 18 Aug 88 p 3

[Text] Engineer Mehdi Bazargan, the leader of the Iranian Freedom Movement, who had gone into hiding in order to avoid arrest after publishing a letter he wrote to Ayatollah Khomeyni, came out of hiding on 10 Mordad [1 August], one day before the unsuccessful demonstrations to "renew allegiance to Khomeyni," and took part in a press conference in Tehran.

In this press conference, Yadollah Sahabi and Dr Ebrahim Yazdi, two other leaders of the Iranian Freedom Movement, also participated. Dr Yazdi responded to the questions of reporters as the spokesman of the Freedom Movement.

The most important question raised in this interview concerned the non-participation of the Freedom Movement in the march to "renew allegiance to Khomeyni." In response to this question, Dr Yazdi said that the Iranian Freedom Movement would not participate in this march, as no invitation had been made to the Movement. The reporters present in that press conference, including the BBC London correspondent, did not pursue the issue of the non-allegiance with Khomeyni of the Freedom Movement in the subsequent questions.

The spokesman of the Freedom Movement ambiguously referred to the inability of the Islamic Republic in the peace negotiations with Iraq, saying: "Considering the bitter experience of the hostages, the affairs must be supervised and newspapers must publish their views and stop self-censorship."

He added: "The second Majlis commissioned a delegation to investigate the Algerian communique (concerning the freedom of the U. S. Embassy hostages in Tehran), and the investigation showed that the communique had not been carefully scrutinized."

If self-censorship in the newspapers and pressure from above did not exist, the probability of our facing such a problem would decrease.

I should point out that since two months ago, six supporters of the Freedom Movement and the society for the defense of freedom and national rule of Iran have been in jail. Those six are: 'Ali Ardalan, Hoseyn Shah-Hoseyni, Engineer Mohammad Tavassoli, Hashem Sabaghian, Ahmad Sadr-Haj Seyyed Javadi and Javakkol Amir-Ebrahimi.

In the opinion of foreign reporters, the fact that Engineer Bazargan, Engineer Sahabi and Dr Yazdi have come out of hiding, and their refusal to support allegiance to Khomeyni, indicate that the regime of the Islamic Republic, because of its internal problems and the efforts it is making to repair its harsh reputation, has to stop persecuting and harming individuals and groups who can somehow go along with the regime.

This interview was conducted while a week earlier (3 Mordad [25 July]) the society for the defense of liberty and national rule of Iran had demanded in a communique that the "officials and those in charge" "return to the Constitution of the Islamic Republic and submit to national rule" in order to get out of the present deadlock and gain the people's participation. The end of the communique states:

"It is with such a return to law and accepting the rights and values of the people and the renewal with the nation that, with the help of the knowing, able God, the complex knots of the war and its aftermath will be untied."

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Bakhtiar on Trade, Reconstruction, Cease-Fire

46400175c London KEYHAN in Persian 18 Aug 88 p 3

[Interview with Shapur Bakhtiar by the press in Munich; date not specified]

[Text] KEYHAN NEWS SERVICE. Munich.

Dr Shapur Bakhtiar, who had traveled to Munich to participate in celebrating the anniversary of the Constitutional revolution, said in a press, radio and television conference that all Western European countries, and even the United States, because of their economic interests, tried to preserve their relations with the Khomeyni regime in the years after the revolution, which has resulted in the survival and duration of the Khomeyni government.

This interview was participated in by reporters from four German networks, the correspondent of SUD DEUTSCHE ZEITUNG, and reporters from the GERMAN NEWS AGENCY and the Voice of America. Dr Bakhtiar responded to questions of the reporters concerning the harsh economic situation of Iran and the possibility for its reconstruction, the stability of the regime after its defeat in the war, the readiness of the National Resistance Movement to run Iran after the regime of Khomeyni, the effect of the radio message of the movement on people not participating in the march to renew allegiance with Khomeyni, the issue of the war, the problem of the People's Mojahedin and the close relationship of the German government with the Islamic Republic.

Dr Bakhtiar responded to this question: "In your opinion and in the opinion of the Iranian opposition abroad, would it not have been better for this war to continue, and the Khomeyni regime to fall apart?"

He said: "I cannot agree with the killing of hundreds of thousands of Iranians just in order to have the war benefit someone. I am a person who has always supported peace. If this peace had been established three years ago, the condition of Iran would have been much better than it is now."

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Cease-fire Announcement Reportedly Tempered by Bitterness

46190015 Paris LE MONDE in French
10 Aug 88 pp 1, 3

[Article by Jean Gueyras, special correspondent in Tehran]

[Text] Tehran—The announcement of a cease-fire agreement between Iran and Iraq—seen as imminent, here, for the past 2 days—has not been greeted with wild enthusiasm. Although a sense of relief is visible, it is discreet and often tempered by bitterness. Even the official media, which give emphasis to the fact that "Iraq finally gave in," are guarded. Underscoring the distance remaining in order to achieve a lasting peace, they issue numerous warnings.

"The enemy is the enemy," wrote the quasi official JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI on Monday. "The war imposed on us, which has lasted nearly 8 years, and the events of recent weeks have proven that he cannot be trusted. We must not forget that Iraq, after strenuously demanding that resolution 589 be respected, launched a border attack against the Islamic Republic as soon as Iran accepted the resolution. This means that Islam's warriors must keep a close watch on developments along the front and that the readiness of our armed forces is the sole guarantee our country can count on."

These warnings are obviously intended for local consumption. No one here—from Mr Rafsanjani, the Army's acting chief of staff who recently reiterated the Islamic Republic's desire for "complete implementation" of resolution 598, to the man in the street—believes a continuation of the war to be likely. The people feel a strong sense of satisfaction, but it is nonetheless tempered by a sadness at the thought of the opportunities missed over the last 8 years and especially by the fact that Iran must make peace from a position of weakness.

An intellectual who until recently still criticized the government for not fully applying itself to end the war, believes that Tehran is forced to negotiate a "shameful peace," after having missed numerous opportunities in

the past to negotiate from a position of strength. "We are no longer the victors—the Iraqis are, and they can dictate to us whatever conditions they chose," he stated with bitterness.

Some Volatile Questions

Our intellectual is not the only one to be spreading such views. OMID-E ENQELAB ("Hope of the Revolution"), which describes itself as a vehicle for the mobilization of the oppressed, gives a catalogue of the questions raised by "counter-revolutionaries and propagators of malicious rumors," whose purpose, it states, is to compound the ambiguities surrounding Iran's decision to accept the Security Council's resolution.

It sums up in six questions the objections raised by opponents to resolution 598: Does the cease-fire mean the end of Islam's battle against the infidel and of the Islamic Republic? Has the Republic abandoned its stands and its slogans? Would it not have been preferable to accept the resolution earlier? Have our martyrs given generously of their blood in vain? Was the war not a scenario arranged by the big powers? Have the authorities accepted the resolution entirely of their own volition or under pressure from these same powers?

These are volatile questions, but the "organ of the oppressed" sweeps them aside, asserting in particular that "the struggle against a world-devouring America is unending and is part of the Islamic Republic's long-term strategy," that "the right moment to accept the resolution was in fact the moment chosen by the authorities." But the mere fact that these six haunting questions were published demonstrates that there is an undeniable malaise in public opinion, both in the moderate traditionalist circles and among "the radical die-hards."

It was apparently for the purpose of calming such apprehensions about the future of the Islamic Republic that President 'Ali Khamene'i, in a speech given Monday at the opening of an international conference on "aggression and defense," painted an optimistic picture of Iran's military and political situation on the eve of what promises to be particularly arduous negotiations. "The whole world is today a witness to the fact that despite our enemies' efforts to end our independence and sovereignty, we have not been exterminated or dismembered and our people remains united. Our political system and our influence in the world have been strengthened; our people's ability to defend our country has grown' and our economy is even more thriving," he stated.

Whatever the case may be, in Tehran it is believed that the time taken by Iraq to accept the cease-fire in an attempt to gain military advantage has awakened a nationalistic reflex within the country and facilitated a remobilization around the theme of "sacred defense" of the fatherland. Similarly, people say they are convinced that Bagdad's stalling tactics have weakened its position

internationally and brightened the image of the Islamic Republic. In the space of 3 weeks, this reasoning continues, Iran has demonstrated that it is ready to accept all reasonable concessions in order to bring the war to an end.

12413/12232

PAKISTAN

Maulana Kausar Niazi Talks on Politics, Foreign Policy, PPP

46560041 Islamabad HURMAT in Urdu

1-7 May 88 pp 8-13

[Interview with former minister Maulana Kausar Niazi: "We Are Doing What America Tells Us To Do," date and place not specified]

[Excerpts] [Question] Our political leaders are making very harsh statements regarding the Kalabagh issue. What would be a solution in your opinion?

[Answer] I'll explain this problem in some detail. Mr Bhutto's government did not have a two-thirds majority, and in two provinces the Jamiatul Ulama-e Islam and the NAP [National Awami Party] had their governments. This is the first time that both in the center and in the provinces any one party has a majority. This government therefore should have been the strongest. But this government is an experiment under the military rule and it is an artificial solidarity. Therefore it has created an uneasy atmosphere among the provincial solidarity. Therefore it has created an uneasy atmosphere among the provincial governments. One chief minister says Kalabagh Dam will be constructed in his life time. Another says center is misusing the budget of the provinces. Various rumors are going around. There should have been discipline and unity because this party was in majority but they have provincial and territorial prejudices. The question is why a situation arose that there are demonstrations against Kalabagh Dam, questions are being raised about revenue matters of the center and the unresolved problem of the waters of rivers is creating tension among the provinces. I have no doubt that it was the spirit of Islam which initiated the establishment of Pakistan. However, the founder of Pakistan fought side-by-side with the Congress for a long time for the sake of freedom.

It was not until very late that the demand of Pakistan was made. Before this, in 1857, Muslims fought the war of independence along with the Hindus. The idea of Pakistan was conceived when we came to know for sure that after the departure of the British, the Hindu majority will start ruling and exploiting us. Pakistan came into being and India was divided into two. After our independence, due to repeated martial law, the smaller provinces got the impression that Punjabis being a majority in the army were taking away their rights through the martial law and exploiting them. This was a

situation identical with the one in India before Pakistan was established. The same reasons were behind the separation of East Pakistan. The people of East Pakistan felt that the Punjabis, a minority, had overpowered them, a majority, and were depriving them of their rights. The solution to all this is to abolish completely the military rule, party based elections should take place and the genuine representatives of the people should try and solve the critical issues. If the Kalabagh is built under the present circumstances, no matter how useful it might be for the country financially, it will create an atmosphere of restlessness.

[Question] You said because of the military government other provinces get the impression that Punjab's majority is imposed upon them. Some politicians of other provinces also accuse Punjab of depriving them of their rights. From this stand point the question is why there has been a lack of leadership in Punjab, and it is even more important in this context [of rights of provinces].

[Answer] As long as there was national politics [and leadership] there was no perception that only Punjab was leading. Now everywhere there is regional politics and provincial leaderships are mushrooming. Punjab carries a national point of view. Now it is imperative for Punjab to have the leadership within and I agree with you there. There are some reasons for the lack of leadership in Punjab. First of all, Punjab's attitude is not provincial. That might be due to the effects of the Khilafat Movement and of Allama Iqbal's thoughts. The slogan: "We are Muslims and the whole world is our country" is still imprinted on people's minds. The Punjabis are so full of the impressions of the Khilafat Movement that if a Turk Muslim contests an election today, I am sure they will vote for him instead of a Punjabi candidate. The other reason is that a feudal leadership has been powerful here and the people of Punjab have always viewed the leadership according to the properties of the feudal lords. At the time of partition, Daultana, Mamdot and Tiwana became leaders. During Ayub Khan's period Nawab of Kalabagh was the leader and in our time Nawab Sadiq Qureshi and Malik Ghulam Mustafar Khar were leaders, who basically belong to the same class. In these circumstances Mr [Hanif] Ramay became the chief minister of Punjab but since the mentality of Punjab does not accept middle class as their rulers, he was not successful. It is deep seated in the mentality of the Punjabis that the leader should either be a landlord or a capitalist. Whenever Punjabis accepted anyone from the outside, the outsider also possessed this quality, except for Quaid-e Azam, but that was a very unusual event in the history and cannot be repeated easily. The press of Punjab also gives more importance to the personalities of other provinces. Even if they have not been the assembly members in their own province, Punjab will make them look wonderful. The personalities of our own province are not given that kind of a boost. As a matter of fact, our own celebrities are character-assassinated and the same personality or character flaws in the politicians of other provinces are ignored that our own people are

reproached for. Punjab is afraid of its own leadership perhaps because it thinks it will be damaging to the unity of Pakistan if leaders of other provinces are not given due importance. Pir Pagara has remarked that if a Punjabi becomes the prime minister, Punjab will become Punjab Desh and Pakistan will become even smaller. Punjab is afraid of this.

[Question] A newspaper editor recently said: "We do not want a Punjabi leadership." You said Punjab always accepts leadership of feudals or capitalists. If that is the case, and there were big feudal lords and capitalists in Punjab's politics before, why are they not considered worthy of leadership now?

[Answer] You are right. But I meant the real big names in politics who are considered Punjabi leaders belong, more or less, to this class. At this time a majority of national and provincial assembly members are from the feudal or capitalist class. The middle class hardly exists in the assemblies. There is another reason for the lack of leadership in Punjab. When there is a feeling of exploitation in a province, someone can air those feelings and become a leader. As I explained the situation after the partition, Punjab has not complained of exploitation by other provinces. A common man has no complaints about other provinces. Since there is no problem or feeling of being exploited, how can there be a leadership which would harbor provincial or territorial thinkings. Punjab complains only that the solidarity of the country is being endangered, or that the foreign policy is not good enough. So the leadership also carries the same point of view. If, God forbid, the feelings of exploitation arose in Punjab, we'll have the same kind of leadership as in any other province.

[Question] You have said, with reference to Pir Pagara, that Pakistan will become even smaller if a Punjabi becomes the prime minister. Could it be the exploiting trick of the other provinces, so the prime minister would always be from some other province?

[Answer] If the president belongs to another province, for example Pir Pagara from Sind who is a very suitable personality for many reasons, in that case the prime minister cannot be from Sind. However, if the president belongs to Sind there is no harm in a Punjabi being the prime minister. According to the constitution, the president has more power than the prime minister. Ever since the independence of India, their prime minister has always been from the Nehru family, which belongs to UP, the largest province of India. Over there nobody complains about the big province imposing upon the smaller ones. In Pakistan all matters rest with the military government and the martial law. If the martial law was permanently abolished and people's representatives were brought in through genuine elections, the presidency can be held by some other province and prime ministership by Punjab and no one will have any objection.

[Question] At present the people of Punjab are thinking they have not deprived any other province of their rights, rather they themselves have been deprived. You have direct contact with people, [you know] ten years ago Punjab did not feel this way, but now they feel they should have their own leaders who would be accountable to their critics?

[Answer] You are right. Punjab has not exploited other provinces. But the people of other provinces feel that the army, which is comprised of a Punjabi majority, has always put an end to democracy and has ruled the center. So no matter how we feel, this impression of other provinces goes against us. Although Punjab does not like the army rule, it does not make efforts to get rid of it either. Punjab did not participate in the movement that was started in Sind to restore the 1973 constitution and democracy, even though the PPP appealed for it. For that reason other provinces thought Punjab was not interested in whether or not the 1973 constitution was restored. This constitution was not a word of God anyway. I am proud that I was a member of the constitutional committee which prepared the document. The talks among the eleven-member committee were attended by many big leaders. They were also worried about the majority province taking over. It was only gradually that all agreed upon provincial autonomy, and a constitution was prepared that was agreed upon by all the parties unanimously. It was correct to say that things have changed. The issue of provincial autonomy can be reviewed. More concessions can be granted. But this problem can only be solved by the elected representatives chosen through party-based elections. These problems cannot be solved by the military.

[Question] You are very conversant on the Afghan issue. There is a concern that an agreement without an interim government will end up in a civil war. What do you think?

[Answer] On my return from Russia, I clearly said in the press conference that Russia had decided to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan. And that if we do not sign that agreement, Russia can withdraw the troops unilaterally. I also said that that could create more problems for us; the Afghan refugees would not return and Russia will keep stabilizing the Kabul regime, and civil war will hang on our heads. Unfortunately we did not consider those implications. As a result the fears that I mentioned came true. If America and Russia had not made an agreement, we could not have done anything. Now we are doing what America is telling us to do. Now there is the issue of an interim government. This must take place. However the interim government should have respect and trust of all classes of Afghanistan. If you form a government of mujahideen alone, Russia will not accept it, whereas a Kabul regime won't be accepted by the mujahideen. So under a formula a person, having involved all elements, should form a government and later hold elections. The government selected through such elections will be accepted by all concerned. For this purpose, the Zahir

Shah formula was presented. I personally know that the Pakistan government and Russia are in its favor. Even India favors it now. Three of the seven mujahideen groups favored it, but this suggestion was also sabotaged. The question is how an interim government should be formed and who should form it. That's why an interim government cannot be formed immediately. We should make an agreement and should not give Russia the opportunity to leave Afghanistan without any agreement. This will be harmful for us. We must let her go only after binding her to an agreement. We must make it promise to assist in the formation of an interim government, and then we should try for its formation. That's the only way. There is no other solution.

[Question] Through your press conference people were astonished to find out that Russia was leaving Afghanistan. Did you actually have a talk with the high officials in Russia about it and you interpreted it this way?

[Answer] Of course I talked to some important personalities of Russia. I read it between the lines. I cannot say anything for sure. It depends on one's analytical power what meanings to derive from the other party. I had meetings with some important press reporters, party leaders and other officials. I clearly sensed that Russia had decided to leave Afghanistan. When I returned, I told this to the high officials of our government as well.

[Question] Before you left, did you meet the prime minister as well?

[Answer] Yes, I did. It was my obligation to not only get permission but also briefings from my government before proceeding to such a sensitive area. I wanted to learn the stand of our government over the critical issues with Russia; and how far they could go to solve them. I met with the officials of the foreign ministry. On my return I informed them about the situation. This was not an official trip. But since this was a national level problem, it was important for me to keep them all posted.

[Question] Now people are not so tense about Russia. They think we should form friendly relations with this powerful neighbor. Don't you think this is a positive change?

[Answer] I think people of Pakistan were never against Russia, the governments were. People always desired to be friends with Russia. As a matter of fact we want good relations with both Russia and America.

We dare not oppose the big powers. If India can have good relations with both Russia and America, why can't we? Besides the Afghan issue we have no dispute with Russia. They say Russia vetoed us on the Kashmir issue but we forget that our own governments have signed anti-Soviet pacts. For example we have signed the SEATO and CENTO treaties, treaties which virtually amounted to besieging Russia. Regarding the Suez Canal

the stand of the then government was in fact a surrender before imperialism. We didn't even take into account the fact that Egypt was a Muslim country. Also we gave a base to America in Budaber and an American aircraft was shot down in Russia after it took off from that air base. In these circumstances how can we expect Russia to be friends with us and not with India? You should take the example of Palestine. America has always backed Israel, but Russia has favored the Arab stand. Russia has cultural, historical and literary connections with the third world. There are fifty million Muslims in Russia. This figure makes her the third biggest Islamic country. How can we annoy such a country? When the Afghan issue is behind us and Russian forces leave, this hindrance will be over with. Russia has given us a steel mill. We can start many projects with it. I am not saying we should start depending on Russia now as we have depended on America before. I think there should be dignity, respect and balance in our relationship with the big powers. We should not give Russia an impression that our foreign policy is controlled by America. The change that you see in people's attitude is indeed a pleasant one.

[Question] Because of the Afghan issue Russia had tension with Pakistan and other Muslim countries. It is said that if this issue is resolved nicely, the relations between the Arab countries and Russia will improve.

[Answer] As you know, Russia does not have diplomatic relations with Saudi Arabia, but Saudi Foreign Minister Saud al Faisal visited Russia. When I went to central Asia I found out that the secretary general of the well-known Saudi religious organization World Muslim Congress had already visited those areas. It seems to me that diplomatic relations between Russia and Saudi Arabia will be established by the end of this year, which will be a significant change in the Muslim world. You are right that as soon as the Afghan issue is resolved, Russia and the Muslim world will come closer to each other.

[Question] The speed and style with which India is increasing its defense forces—don't you think Pakistanis feel threatened and discouraged by it?

[Answer] In fact this issue can also be resolved by creating better relations with Russia. As long as we have the Soviet Union opposing us, she will clearly be inclined towards India. If Russia wants to harm Pakistan in some way but cannot do it openly, India will be used for this purpose. Russia will continue sending arms to India. India is under the influence of Russia. If we form friendly relations with Russia, consequently tension between Pakistan and India will lessen. Right now we are depending on America, but America is willing to give the same amount of aid to India as well. Our foreign policy is responsible for that. It is a fact that we do not have enough military resources to fight India. It's only our

unity that can make us successful and you are well aware of our unity. We must take care of our internal problems, fulfill the needs of the smaller provinces and correct our foreign policy.

[Question] According to a newspaper report, the president is in favor of general elections in 1989 and is trying to convince the prime minister of that. Do you see that at all?

[Answer] It will be General Zia's need to hold elections in 1989 because he wants to be a presidential candidate and wants to nominate his favorite candidate for prime ministership. President Zia can stay in power till 1990. Obviously he would want the elections to take place a few months before that. Only then will he be able to nominate a prime ministerial candidate and pave the way for his own candidacy. I am sure elections will take place next year.

[Question] Do you think Prime Minister Junejo will agree to that?

[Answer] We have to see who holds the elections. If it is Mr Junejo, he would want it on the due date. If it is Mr President, he is going to hold it within the term of his rule. In 1990 he will not have a full control. However if the president wants to hold the elections with the consent of the prime minister, he will need to dissolve the assemblies and to establish an interim government, for which many politicians are awaiting. In that case the prime minister will have to give the president some concession. If he sticks with the constitution, he won't be able to become a presidential candidate for two years, unless the constitution is amended, and now Mr Junejo is the only one who could get it amended.

[Question] They say you believe in negotiation in politics. You tried to convince the People's Party to avoid mounting a front against the military. Why didn't the key persons of the PPP agree with you? What good did the policy of conflict do to the party?

[Answer] What I said nine years ago is now being repeated by the PPP's main leaders, namely, Ghulam Mustufa Jatui, Mustafa Khar, Rao Rasheed, Mairaj Khalid and Makhdoom Talibul Maula. When I said this PPP was at the height of its popularity. But I sincerely believed it to be in the interest of the party. At that time they said that I was doing this for some vested interest and that I had joined General Zia. Time has proved that I never joined General Zia nor did I accept a position in his government. During the period when I was in the senate, I openly criticized General Zia. You'll hardly find another politician who will talk so openly. I have not joined any party besides PPP. I did all this because I heeded the call of my conscience and did all this in the interest of my country. But unfortunately PPP was predominated by the Bhutto family. Believe me, when I took that stand the majority of the central committee was with me, but they didn't have the courage to stand

up for it. As far as the Bhutto family is concerned, I respect both ladies. They have faced the circumstances with great courage. They suffered a great deal and made history. However sometimes an overly brave person starts making stupid mistakes. Both of these ladies are blessed with bravery but they lack political experience and insight, which is needed to solve problems. You asked me why the high command did not agree with me. They agreed with me in their hearts but kept quiet due to some expedience. The Bhutto ladies had the courage but lacked the political insight and experience which they needed at that time. For that reason those problems became unsolvable. As a result, today the People's Party is a diverse group.

[Question] Once you said with great confidence that People's Party cannot come into power in Pakistan again?

[Answer] Yes. I said with this leadership it can not. Unless it makes major changes in its program and leadership, it does not stand a chance. Note the change in their position by the fact that when Mr Bhutto formed the party, they were known as anti-capitalist. They stood for the end of imperialism and feudalism. The common man believed this party was determined to change the political and economic scene. Now these programs don't exist anymore. Now People's Party is not an anti-capitalism, anti-imperialism party. They don't say a word against America. There is no clear plan to end capitalism and feudalism. There is no new manifesto. On the Afghan issue their policy is the same as that of the government or of Jamaat-e Islami. So the common man thinks People's Party has become the Muslim League.

The common man says to himself: "If I am to join the Muslim League, why not join the one in power?"

[Question] General Tikka Khan has said the major reason of the downfall of the PPP is Ghulam Mustafa Khar. You must have analyzed PPP's downfall?

There is a Junejo Muslim League and there is a Benazir Muslim League.

[Answer] General Tikka Khan is a very interesting old man. He talks very boldly, and in a military style. But what he says has nothing to do with politics. Mr Khar is a politician. He is a wonderful administrator. When he was in power, the PPP was very popular. The downfall started when non-political persons such as General Tikka Khan were given the office of additional secretary. This was an oddity. Before Tikka Khan the post of additional secretary did not exist in any political party. A man who was in the army all his life and was used to doing whatever the high command said, who had spent his life strengthening the British rule was given such an important office in such a big party. In my opinion this was another cause of the downfall of the People's Party.

Presidential Shariat Ordinance Said To Block Enforcement of Islam

46560052 Lahore NAWA-I-WAQT in Urdu
28 Jun 88 p 10

[Article by Qazi Hussain Ahmad, Amir of Jamaat-e Islami, Pakistan: "Shariat Will Not Be Enforced Through Presidential Ordinances"]

[Text] It was not merely a sentimental thing when I described the President's Shariat Ordinance as an obstruction of the Shariat Ordinance instead of the enforcement of Shariat. Rather, there are strong arguments to support it.

After the objectives resolution was established as a part of the Constitution, two High Courts of the country, based on the objectives resolution, while ignoring certain current laws began issuing decisions in the light of the Koran and the Sunna. Among them are also the historic decisions of some cases connected with the dealing of interest. These decisions were issued by Justice Tanzilur Rahman. The administration was highly disturbed by those decisions. It searched for various excuses to safeguard the revenue laws and the interest dealings in defiance of the Koran and the Sunna. Through the present Ordinance, the president has limited the authority of the High Courts to issue decisions on the basis of the objectives resolution. Thus, through this Ordinance, instead of accelerating the enforcement of Shariat, its path has been closed.

The demand to enforce Shariat is a natural requisite of freedom. That is why immediately after independence, the Muslims of Pakistan demanded that after the departure of the British, their law also should go. It is the right of the obedient servants of God to lead their lives according to the Shariat. The rights that Shariat has bestowed upon mankind and the manner in which it has liberated men from slavery of other men, on that basis, no one has the authority to deprive any human being from those rights and freedoms that are a gift of God to him. If he regains it in any way, he is entitled to have it. But the subject under discussion is that President Zia, for the past 11 years, has used considerably the name of the enforcement of Islam, yet he could take no positive step for it. He himself has admitted that.

If the 1973 Constitution had been enforced continuously in the country, and it had been acted upon, then conforming to the method of procedure set forth in it, by 1982, all the laws of the country should have been framed according to the Koran and the Sunna. Because under the article 230 (4) of the Constitution of the Islamic Ideology Council, it was its constitutional duty that it should accomplish its task within 7 years, that is until 1980, and present its final report consisting of complete recommendations to construct the laws according to the Koran and the Sunna. Likewise, it was the constitutional duty of the national and provincial assemblies to implement these recommendations within 2

years. The Islamic Ideology Council, to a considerable extent, took no practical step for their implementation, so much so that the elected institutions came into existence.

After the establishment of the elected institutions, a Private Shariat Bill was introduced in the National Assembly and the Senate. The National Assembly, right from the start, never regarded it worth consideration. The Senate, however, did approve to bring this bill under discussion. The Shariat Bill was in fact the result of despair with regard to the administration's attitude towards fulfilling the constitutional requisites for the enforcement of Shariat. The Shariat Bill was adopted as an alternate course for the enforcement of Shariat. The basic intention of the Shariat Bill was that all the courts of the country should be bound down to issue decisions according to the Shariat. If any court learns that some current law is against the specific commandments of Shariat, it should have the authority to relinquish the current law and make decision according to God's Shariat. During the Muslim League era, there were lengthy dialogues between the proposers of the Shariat Bill, the representatives of the United Shariat Front formed to harmonize the public opinion in its favor and the representatives of the government. These dialogues, however, were unsuccessful because the Shariat front was unwilling to give up its basic demand that "the courts would be bound to decide according to Shariat instead of the current laws." Whereas, the administration was firm on its stand that "the court would be bound to decide according to the current laws only." However, if any question would be raised about some law being against Shariat, that could be forwarded to the Federal Shariat Court or the High Court.

Except for this one basic opposing viewpoint, an accord was possible between the United Shariat Front and the former administration on the remaining points of the Shariat Bill. They were not prepared, however, to give up their respective positions on this basic point. Finally, the Muslim League government presented its own alternate amended Shariat Bill in the Senate under the names of Sen Jahangir Shah Jogizai and Sen Gen Saeed Qadir. The proposers of the Shariat Bill rejected it. To get rid of the deadlock caused by this situation, the administration turned this whole matter to a special committee of the Senate.

On 29 May 1988 among the major reasons stated by the president to suspend the assemblies and the federal cabinet, one was that the Muslim League administration had failed to pass the Shariat Bill. The strange thing is that under the name of the Shariat Ordinance 1988, the draft to enforce Shariat that was read to the nation, was based on that very manuscript which was presented by the two senators Jahangir Shah Jogizai and Gen Saeed Qadir upon the suggestion of the Muslim League administration. They were also prepared to improve it.

Before the enforcement of this ordinance, President Ziaul Haq formed a committee (Doctor Halay Pota Committee) comprising of the leaders of the Islamic Ideology Council and the Organization of the Islamic Investigation. In this committee, on 6 June, some of the country's eminent scholars and lawyers also were summoned to Islamabad. After holding lengthy sessions of 28 hours for 3 days, a draft ordinance was proposed. During the preparation of this draft, President Ziaul Haq participated in person in all the sessions. There were lengthy discussions in his presence between the respected scholars and the department of justice on every word of the proposed draft. Finally a draft was prepared in English. Some ulema, however, refused to sign it declaring that they should be first provided with its Urdu copy. The draft was therefore translated into Urdu and presented to the respected ulema, and they signed it. The respected ulema were assured that the Shariat Ordinance would be comprised of the draft prepared by them. before the enforcement of the ordinance, therefore, supporting statements from some of the ulema were also acquired. But, they were all struck with amazement with they saw that in the ordinance enforced, the federal cabinet, in its 15 June meeting, had eliminated all those factors which they had included after fighting with those responsible for the Department of Justice. So much so that Mufti Mohammad Hussain Naeemi Sahib was compelled to say that the Department of Justice had deceived the ulema.

Following is the Shariat Bill presented in the Senate by two distinguished ulema, and a comparison of the draft passed by the committee appointed by the President himself and that sat in his presence, and the ordinance issued.

1. Private Shariat Bill: In this Bill, in the amendments by the two senators connected with the ruling party, and in the article No 3 of the draft proposed and resolved by the committee of honorable ulema and lawyers appointed by the president himself, it states that Shariat will be the supreme source of law in the country's justice. In other words, Shariat has not at all been recognized as the supreme law. To avoid Shariat, the support of the beautiful words of the source of law has been secured. By recognizing Shariat as the source of law instead of describing it as the supreme law, it does not attain the legal status that is sought.

2. Article 4 of the Ulema's Private Shariat Bill says that the courts would be bound to decide according to Shariat. Its purpose was that the laws contradicting the Shariat would become obsolete by themselves. In the draft of the committee appointed by the president himself, it states that if a question is raised about some law as to whether it is according to Shariat or not, it will be sent to the Shariat Court. If it is not in the hearing jurisdiction of the Shariat court, it will be sent to the High Court concerned, so that a decision could be obtained within 2 months as to whether that law is

according to Shariat or not. During this period, however, the proceedings of the case will be halted, so that the decision of the case can be made after receiving the reply of that reference.

In the Ordinance issued, the restriction to stop the case proceeding has been removed. Contrary to that, the sub-article 11 of clause 4 says that the hearing of the case will continue as usual, and the decision of the case will also be issued according to the current laws. Furthermore, it is specifically said that despite receiving the High Court's decision, that decision will not be enforced for 6 months. If the administration wishes, it can request for further 3 months extension.

It is noteworthy here that if the administration files an appeal in the Supreme Court against the decision of the High Court, it has been granted 6 months duration instead of 2 months for appeal. After filing the appeal, the administration can have the decision postponed for an indefinite period of time. Even now, such appeals are lying in the Supreme Court for years.

3. In the articles 6 and 7 of the Private Shariat Bill of the Ulema, it was mentioned that no person including the president and the prime minister would be above the restriction of Shariat. He would be unable to issue ordinances against Shariat. All the government officials including the president would not be superior to being accounted for according to the Islamic law of justice. In other words, the courts can summon any person.

On 6 June, the meeting that the president called of the Ulema and lawyers, that, too, approved article 7 of the proposed draft of the Shariat Ordinance, in which it was said that all the office holders of the administration, while abiding by the Constitution, would be bound and responsible to establish the Islamic justice. Regrettably, this vital clause has been eliminated from the ordinance enforced.

4. On 6 June, the committee appointed by the president, in its proposed draft, authorized the Federal Shariat Court in exactly the same manner as the High Courts already possess under the Constitution, to issue a writ against any non-Shariat activity in the country. In the Presidential Ordinance, however, this point also has been omitted.

In the current Presidential Ordinance, the entire task of structuring the fiscal regulations according to Islam and the reformation of the educational system has been entrusted to the commissions and the committees. Unfortunately, a bad custom exists in our country that any work that is not to be done or that is to be postponed for an indefinite period of time, is assigned to some committee. From among all the commissions and committees formed in our country, it cannot be said about any one of them that its recommendations have been acted upon so far. The reports of many commissions for years are lying in the confidential category. Dozens of

commissions have been established for the reformation of the educational system, but the dream for an Islamic educational system has not become a reality yet.

With regard to all those flaws, in the light of the above mentioned arguments, we are justified to say that the president, by naming Islam, is trying to obstruct the path of Islam. He is using this tactic to obtuse the public demand of enforcing Islam in the forthcoming elections.

There is urgent need of the fact that this veil of contradiction and double dealing should be slit open. This fact should be stated in open words that the president's promise of enforcing Islam is a mirage.

In order to enforce Islam, the people should side with the Islamic forces of the country. The respected Ulema should continue their united efforts for the fundamental duty of the enforcement of Shariat. The Presidential Ordinance mentions to make the Ulema such Muftis whose appointment and employment would depend totally upon the pleasure of the president. This is an insult of the righteous Ulema. In this regard, especially the respected Hanfi Ulema should keep in view the splendid example of the great Imam, Hazrat Imam abu Hanifa (God's mercy be upon him). Instead of enforcing Shariat, an effort has been made that the Ulema should become Muftis and that by receiving huge salaries, they should relinquish their demand for the enforcement of Shariat. God willing, the righteous ulema under no circumstances will enter this trap of deceit.

9779/12232

Radio, TV Blackout of Supreme Court Decision on Political Parties Act Criticized
46560051b Lahore NAWA-I-WAQT in Urdu
22 Jun 88 p 5

[Column "Meem Sheen Diary" by Meem Sheen]

[Excerpts] In my opinion, the biggest tragedy with the Pakistan rulers is the chasm between their words and deeds. Consider, for example, that the full bench of the Supreme Court, the highest court in the land, has unanimously handed down a historic decision whereby it has given all political parties full permission to take part in general elections regardless of their registration or the lack of it. This decision has ended all speculation whether or not the Pakistan Peoples Party, in the absence of its registration, will or will not be able to take part in the general elections. The Supreme Court's final, unequivocal, clear and categoric decision has given the PPP and all other political parties general permission to take part in the general elections even without registration but by blackout of the decision of the highest court of the land, the Radio Pakistan and Pakistan Television have been guilty of concealing the truth. This decision of the Supreme Court does not merely affect a few political parties of Pakistan but it will have far-reaching consequences for the future of Pakistan. The Supreme Court's

decision will affect the lives of all of the 100 million citizens of Pakistan. If blackout from the government radio and TV of this important decision of the Supreme Court, which touches the lives of 100 million people Pakistan, is not contempt of court, what is it. Within a few hours of the announcement of the Supreme Court's decision, all the world's broadcast and publication agencies made arrangements for its large-scale dissemination. Blackout of this news by Radio Pakistan and Pakistan Television has become a subject of ridicule.

Now as was the case with the Tehrike Istiqlal, political parties should place their manifestos before the public. It is duty of the government to make arrangements so that all the political parties may be able to broadcast their manifestos over the official communication channels. President General Mohammed Ziaul Haq, who is for all practical purposes, leader of the ministerial party, should also present his program. The nation will decide to which leadership it will cast the vote of its confidence.

If General Mohammed Ziaul Haq wants to win peoples' confidence for himself and his comrades on the basis of a program of Islam and Shariat, in that case, he and his ministers will have to appear before the public as paragons of Islam. They cannot, on the one hand, keep chanting Shariat, Shariat, and on the other hand, ban mention of the historic decisions of the constitutional Supreme Court over their broadcast agencies. It will not be enough to claim that a TV officer made a mistake.

12286/08309

Editorial Views Court Decision on Political Parties Act
46560051a Lahore NAWA-I-WAQT in Urdu
22 Jun 88 p 3

[Text] Acting on a writ filed by the Peoples Party leader Begum Benazir Bhutto, the Supreme Court of Pakistan has declared illegal the law relating to registration of political parties. The decision says that the related provisions of the amended Political Parties Act of 1962 violate fundamental rights granted under articles 17 (2) and (3) of the Pakistani constitution. At the present juncture this decision of the Supreme Court is of the greatest importance since after the Pakistan president's action of 29 May, general elections are due to take place in accordance with the provisions of the constitution and the political parties were apprehensive that taking advantage of the 1979 amendment to the Political Parties Act, the government will stop those political parties from taking part in the elections which had not registered with the Election Commission of Pakistan. This historic decision of the Supreme Court of Pakistan also shows that if rulers act unconstitutionally, the judiciary dispenses justice. In fact, in this matter, the rulers are more at fault than the advisors who try to be more loyal than the king and who teach the government of the day such tricks as are expedient to the government at the time but in the long run do irreparable harm to the

country and the nation. When in 1979 the martial law government announced the second date for holding general elections, to keep certain political parties from participating in the elections, it made such amendments to the Political Parties Act as were in conflict with and in violation of the fundamental rights granted in the constitution. But at that time, it was a martial law government, the constitution was under suspension, fundamental rights were completely unenforceable and before long the elections were also called off. But at the grassroot level the political parties continued their protest against these amendments. The March 1985 elections were non-party anyway but the new assembly fixed its seal of approval on the martial law government amendments to the Political Parties Act and now the Supreme Court of Pakistan has declared the amendments unconstitutional following which the registration restrictions on the political parties are a thing of the past. However the conditions of submission of accounts and abiding by the philosophy of Pakistan still remain so that no group which accepts funds from a foreign country may form a party and thus become a champion of foreign interests or it may not be against the basic philosophy of Pakistan. The fact is that in a parliamentary democratic system, the political parties are the basic pillars of the system. Therefore they cannot be subjected to unconstitutional restrictions but while working within the bounds of the law and constitution, they are supposed to engage in politics and protect the rights of the people and solve their problems without let or hinderance. As a result of this decision of the Supreme Court the political parties have regained this freedom. But instead of crowing and jubilating over this decision, the political parties should seriously prepare themselves for elections and for this purpose, first of all, they should concentrate on organizing themselves. The political parties should democratize their structure and by a nationwide membership drive, they should elect their office bearers. Unfortunately

most of our political parties are not in the habit of doing their homework on national problems and the people's difficulties and they are in the habit of playing politics by means of cheap sloganeering. The way to do it is for every political party to set up different special cells wherein experts in various fields analyze the country's problems and suggest solutions on behalf of the party and in light of this program provide the public with an opportunity to vote so that the majority of the party with the better program and manifesto and let it form and run the government. We expect that in whatever little time remaining before the elections, the political parties will concentrate on homework. Both internally and externally Pakistan at the moment is passing through a very critical phase and if a solution is to be found to these problems, then a serious, thoughtful and deep analysis is a must.

As a result of the Supreme Court of Pakistan's recent decision, the existence of political parties has been recognized as a constitutional right. Therefore it is hoped that in line with its promise, the government will announce the holding of the coming general elections on a party basis. The president is quite familiar with the non-party elections and the assemblies resulting from it and despite the labelling of the government party as the Muslim League, its debacle is not hidden from anybody. In the light of this experience, the idea of non-party elections in Pakistan should be banished from thought forever and in accordance with well-known democratic traditions, the political parties should be given the right to come to power and engage in politics through elections. If the experts of legal technicalities make better use of their talents and refrain from doing any more mischief, the country and the nation will be very grateful to them.

12286/08309